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With Literary Supplement.

All MSS. and letters relating thereto should be addressed to the Editor, at 10 Great Queen Street, Kingsway, London, W.C.

ONCE more the chief events of the week relate to labour disputes. Dublin remains the storm centre. The deadlock there has during the past few days only become more complete. Mr. Larkin was released on bail at the end of last week, and immediately the Employers' Federation decided that they would not resume the adjourned Conference. The ostensible grounds of their decision were the absence of any machinery for enforcing agreements, the unwillingness of the English delegates to make themselves responsible for agreements entered into with the Irish Transport Workers' Union, and the avowed determination of the men to accept no settlement to which Mr. Larkin was not a party.

* * *

The general lock-out of Transport Union members in the carrying trade followed the refusal to resume the Conference; the general lock-out in the building trade followed on Monday. But here the employers met with an unexpected rebuff. They had been relying on the United Builders' Labourers' Union—a rival to the Transport Union, and its competitor for this class of unskilled labour—to keep their works open. The members of this Union, however, unanimously resolved not to sign the document proffered by the masters, which required them to say that they would not "support in any way" the Transport Union. Consequently the lock-out in the building trade is much more extensive than the masters had anticipated. The farmers also took steps to repudiate their recent agreements with the Transport Union, and gave notice to their labourers to leave the Union or their employment; the Union thereupon called out all their men instead of waiting for the lock-out, and about a thousand farm labourers in County Dublin came out on Monday, to be joined later in the week by many more. Mr. William Martin Murphy, though he repudiates leadership of the employers, spent several days last week motoring through the county and interviewing the farmers, with a view to securing their united action against "Larkinism."

* * *

The plan of the employers is simple—starve the men out; throw as many of them as possible on to the paysheets of their respective Unions, and especially of the Transport Union, until exhaustion of funds makes it impossible for them to hold out. There has been severe criticism in Labour circles in Dublin of the conduct of the delegates of the British Trade Union Congress on the ground that by their futile attempt to prolong negotiations which the masters never regarded seriously they have played into the latter's hands. What was wanted was a prompt report to Congress on the vital importance of the issues at stake and on the arbitrary conduct of the masters, coupled with a strong appeal for financial support from the English Trade Unions—support which, if the Congress delegates had spoken out as Mr. Keir Hardie did, would, it is felt, speedily be forthcoming. Every day wasted over negotiations under present conditions is a day that brings the workers nearer to exhaustion of funds and starvation. The spirit of the men is very good, especially since the release of Mr. Larkin and of Mr. Conolly (who is the first non-suffragist prisoner to force his way out of prison by means of the hunger strike);

but the large numbers of men out involve a very great drain on the available funds. A scheme is on foot, in which Mr. George Russell ("Æ") is interesting himself, to organise the sale of food to the locked-out men at cost price. We fancy, by the way, that a good many people in this country need to be reminded that what is happening in Dublin is for the most part not a strike, but a lock-out; that is to say, that the employers are the aggressors.

* * *

On Saturday last a circular was issued by the Executive of the National Union of Railwaymen, condemning the "sympathetic strike," as applied to the transport of goods produced or handled by blacklegs, on the grounds: (1) that the railway companies are compelled by statute to carry all goods tendered to them for transport and cannot discriminate; and (2) that if the sympathetic strike were adopted as a policy, railwaymen would be involved in practically every industrial dispute in the kingdom. The sympathetic strike being Mr. Jim Larkin's favourite weapon, this circular was generally interpreted in Dublin as a repudiation of "Larkinism." On Monday, therefore, two Dublin delegates came to London to point out to the Executive of the National Union of Railwaymen that the present struggle, involving as it does the root principle of Trade Unionism, was on footing different from that of sympathetic strikes in general. In consequence the Railwaymen's Executive are reported to have declared that the circular had no reference to the position in Dublin. This the Dublin men regarded as a triumph. Meanwhile, however, sympathetic strikes on a considerable scale have occurred amongst the railwaymen in Liverpool, in Manchester, and in Birmingham. The truth is that the sympathetic strike, indefensible in theory (as regards the railways at all events), can only be justified by prompt success, and already we fear the English railway workers who have thought fit to espouse the cause of their Irish colleagues in this fashion are finding that their officials are right and they are wrong. They would do more to embarrass Mr. Murphy and to upset his plans by remaining at work and contributing as much of their pay as they can afford to the funds of the Dublin workers.

* * *

A case in which the sympathetic strike in a peculiar form looks very much like being justified by success has occurred this week in London. The Bookbinders' Union has on hand a dispute with Messrs. J. Burn & Co., and in furtherance of that dispute has instructed its members who are working for other bookbinding firms to refuse to touch the books of publishers who place *any* of their binding work with Messrs. Burn. Accordingly a number of publishers have agreed to give no orders to Messrs. Burn until the dispute is over; whilst the other bookbinding firms are for the most part taking the men's view of the situation and making no difficulty about their refusal to deal with certain books. Since there is great pressure in the binding trade just now, there is plenty of other work to be done, and if the men's tactics achieve their object, the only sufferers will be the recalcitrant Messrs. Burn and such of the publishers as insist on continuing to deal with them. Some time ago a writer in our columns urged the need for a "science of striking." The Bookbinders would seem to have developed something very like a scientific method.

* * *

The Board of Trade has announced the extension of the Trade Boards Act to the confectionery and food-preserving, shirt-making, sheet-metal hollow ware, tin box and canister trades. Commenting upon this announcement, the *Times* described the Act as representing "a partial awakening of the national conscience to the nation's neglect of duty." We may suppose, indeed, that the principle of Trade Boards is now established beyond question—except, of course, by those who see in any improvement of the workers' lot, not won wholly and solely at the point of the sword, merely another step towards the "servile state." But, having said so much, the *Times* seems to have had misgivings, and proceeded to urge that the Act was only justified by "the exceptional character of the evils with which it deals," and that the tendency to extend the principle of a minimum wage to non-sweated trades was full of danger, and must be carefully guarded against. We wonder what the *Times* means by the "dangers" to which it refers, whether indeed it means anything at all. The only instances of danger it mentions are: (1) foreign competition, and (2) the obvious fact that no employer can afford to pay to homeworkers for the finished article more than he pays for it when it is manufactured by power-driven machines in factories. Danger No. 1 applies, if at all, to sweated and non-sweated industries alike. And Danger No. 2 is not a danger at all; if homeworkers' rates are raised above a certain point homeworkers will disappear, that is all, and who will mourn? Certainly no enemy of sweating.

* * *

But we should like to ask the *Times* leader-writer what advice he would give to those workers who, without being "sweated" in the common acceptance of that word, are nevertheless seriously underpaid. They must not strike, and they are not to have Wages Boards. Is there anything they may do to improve their lot? or are they to remain content until, by the operation of the rise in the cost of living, they automatically sink to the level of a "sweated" trade and so qualify for a Trade Board? We do not for a moment suppose that the *Times* has considered this dilemma; nor, indeed, that it has ever given the slightest serious attention to the problem of the regulation of wages. For if it had it would know that the distinction it imagines between sweated and non-sweated trades does not exist, that there are no dangers to be anticipated from a quite indefinite extension of Trade Boards, and that the only attempt to establish such boards in well-paid trades—in Victoria—has met with such rapid approval from employers and employed alike that practically every trade in that colony (even trades where the wage is as high as £3 a week) now has its Board. When every trade in this country has its Board, we are confident that the *Times* will be congratulating itself and the public on the results, and will be warning us about the unknown dangers of some quite other proposal.

The negotiations between the Turks and the Bulgarians ended on Wednesday in a complete victory for the former. They insisted on the retention of Demotika and Kirk Kilisse in order that Adrianople might be protected on both flanks; and the Bulgarian delegates, powerless to resist the demand, sullenly submitted. The new frontier starts from Enos, on the Ægean, and then runs northward, passing about midway between Adrianople and Mustapha Pasha. After a turn to the north-east, for some distance it coincides with the old Turco-Bulgarian frontier, but from Kaibilar it goes to Sveti Stefan, on the Black Sea, leaving Bulgaria with a small triangular piece of new territory with about twenty miles of coastline. There is grim humour in the reflection that all the places where the greatest Bulgarian feats of arms were achieved remain on Turkish soil; but it is not to be forgotten that, although she has lost most of her conquests in Eastern Thrace, Bulgaria has yet acquired a considerable accession of territory. Unhappily, nobody imagines that this will satisfy her; and the mere fact that everyone is assuming that she will again attack Turkey and speculating as to how long it will take her to recuperate, is in itself a thorough condemnation of the Great Powers. Their failure to insist on their own settlement was a piece of criminal negligence that is not excused by saying that their general selfishness and jealousy made it inevitable.

* * *

We should be the last to insist that our national system of education is all that could be desired, but we feel that some of the criticisms which were levelled at it by Principal Griffiths before the British Association last week were hardly deserved. Against the charge made by Dr. Griffiths (and also by employers of cheap child clerks) that the product of the elementary schools cannot spell or keep accounts may be placed the facts that 63 per cent. of the boys and 58 per cent. of the girls attending the English Secondary Schools on the grant list of the Board of Education—about 92,000 in all—are ex-elementary school scholars, and that no small proportion of the undergraduates at the newer universities come from public primary schools. "Those who talk of compulsory further education," said Dr. Griffiths, "appear to think that all men are on an equality as regards mental equipment"—by which presumably he meant that, in his opinion, the majority of children are unfit for secondary education. The success which, on the whole, has attended the long and costly training of the mediocre-minded among the middle and upper classes seems to show the contrary. To assert that any child who is not an idiot cannot benefit by secondary education is merely to exhibit a narrow outlook, a false conception of the character and possibilities of such education.

* * *

What, however, we feel most inclined to quarrel with in Dr. Griffiths's Presidential address is his perfectly unjustifiable statement that "Democracy in its control of education counts noses rather than brains." In proof of this he cited cases of the unwillingness of Education Committees to continue advanced classes with four students, but who rub their hands with glee at the prospect of shorthand classes containing a hundred members of the black-coated proletariat. The truth is that the statement should read "Commercialism in its control of education counts Government grants above everything else." Democracy has never controlled education, except in theory. Everybody knows that education is, in the main, run by committees of business people in the interests of the rates. The people may perhaps be justly accused of not taking steps to control their own education, but it is the commercial element which is actually in control that must face the charge of putting grants before education. Dr. Griffiths, pointing out that we spend £34,000,000 a year out of rates and taxes, asked whether we get value for our money. Perhaps it would be true to say that a nation which spends through rates and taxes only 2 per cent. of its income on education gets a good deal more than it deserves.

* * *

Further evidence of the large measure of agreement which exists amongst serious students of all parties on the subject of rural reform is afforded by a pamphlet which has just been issued by "A Group of Unionists" (*A Unionist Agricultural Policy.* Murray. 6d. net). The writers fully recognise that low wages are at the root of the problem. They propose Agricultural Wages Boards, the provision by local authorities with State aid of 125,000 new cottages with adequate gardens and accommodation land, the re-creation of common village cow pastures, the thorough reorganisation of rural education with increased Grants in Aid, the provision by the State of demonstration farms and agricultural instructors, the development of Small Holdings grouped as far as possible in colonies, the establishment of Credit Banks, the development of agricultural co-operation and of co-operative marketing, the endowment of the Board of Agriculture with an income of at least £1,000,000 instead of only £150,000, the regulation of railway rates so as to check the present discrimination against home agricultural produce, and finally a redistribution of the burdens of Local and Imperial taxation, so that the cost of main roads, asylums, police, and education should be defrayed for the most part by the nation as whole. It would not be difficult to suggest improvements on and additions to these proposals, but it is—for Conservatives—a courageous programme, and its accomplishment would be a very big step forward.

* * *

The late Harry Quelch was a man of iron will, powerful mind, and unquestionable honesty. That he did not become a more prominent figure in English politics was due to one thing only—his relentless adherence to the Marxian dogma, on which he stationed himself like St. Simeon on his pillar, refusing to allow either his own comfort or advancement or the views of his neighbours to dictate a change of position. A son of working-class parents, he taught himself French in order to read Marx (of whom there was then no English version), and *Das Kapital* was thenceforth Bible and Koran to him. He was with Morris and with Hyndman in the early days of the Social Democratic Federation, and as time went on he became more and more the organising brain of that

body under its various successive names. The numbers of his party might refuse to grow; the Independent Labour Party might overtake it with great strides; every by-election might find its candidates at the bottom of the poll; none of these things made Quelch turn a hair. At meetings he went on serenely confident in the invulnerability of his doctrine, speaking in the old cast-iron way; and the columns of *Justice* never betrayed the least tinge of a desire to palter with "palliatives" and "Lib-Labism." When the Syndicalists came along, Quelch found himself in the surprising *rôle* of a comparatively "bourgeois" politician; but his Marxism could sustain all attacks, from one side as from the other, and he never dallied with the novelty. A big, strong man with direct eyes, a voluminous moustache, and a good voice, he impressed everyone who met him by his freedom from egotism and pose and by his admirable contempt for everything that he considered to be nonsense.

* * *

The paper which Dr. A. L. Bowley read to the Economic Section of the British Association on "The Relation Between the Changes of Wholesale and Retail Prices of Food" was worthy of his high reputation as an economic statistician. Both he and Mrs. Frances Wood, who criticised the Board of Trade index numbers concerning the prices of the food of the people, found it impossible to rely upon those very statistics with which the rival fiscal controversialists have made such play these ten years past. The official records so painstakingly tabulated do not even reveal trustworthy evidence as to how closely retail price-changes follow wholesale price-changes. Wholesale prices are not an accurate guide to the retail counter. Retailers, for example, often thrust the whole increase on the richer customers without altering the prices to the poorer. "Until the changes in the retail prices at 10 o'clock on Saturday night are known we cannot say what the increase of the cost of living of the working class is," says Dr. Bowley. In the index numbers, again, no account is taken of qualities, nor of changes in food fashions. Such important articles of diet as fish, fruit, and margarine are altogether ignored. Indeed, it appears that the criticisms of the figures upon which we are all accustomed to rely might be prolonged indefinitely.

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But whilst we may question and criticise in detail the statistics with which the Board of Trade supplies us, no one, of course, questions the broad fact that a great rise in prices has taken place during the past ten years. The causes of this rise are examined by Mr. Chiozza Money in an interesting article in the current number of *The Contemporary Review*. Mr. Money does not deny that the increase in the world's gold production has had any influence upon prices, but he maintains that such influence, if it has existed, has been overwhelmed by other influences of a much greater potency. After studying the relative price-changes of different commodities—for though most prices have gone up, many very important articles, such as cocoa, coal, silk, and paraffin, are far cheaper to-day than they were in 1900—he comes to the conclusion that the comparatively low prices that obtained in the late 'eighties and the 'nineties were in their nature exceptional—that is to say, that they were due to the over-rapid exploitation of great natural resources in America and elsewhere, "the large scale scratch-farming, the creaming of the world's richest mines, the hewing of the world's best timber," and so on. This process came to a natural end and prices began to rise again to a more normal level. We will not venture an opinion as to the final sufficiency of this explanation, but it seems to be more satisfactory than any other that we can remember to have been put forward. Unfortunately it offers us no prospect of a return to the prices of 1896, and if we accept it we must fall back with Mr. Money on the hope that "scientific endeavour will be equal in the long run to the production of an enduring cheapness."

* * *

The Scottish newspapers record the trial, conviction, and sentence of Patrick Higgins, a general labourer of Linlithgow, a widower, for the murder of his two sons by drowning, nearly two years ago. In this sad story of brutality and destitution there is a lesson which we hope will come to the notice of the President of the English Local Government Board, in connection with the draft new Workhouse Order, which, reactionary as it is, he is presently going to sign. One of the worst features of the Poor Law, in England as well as in Scotland, is the rule that a parent who leaves the workhouse shall take his children with him, even if he cannot provide a decent home for them. The murderer and his two little boys had been in receipt of parochial relief in 1911, and the Poor Law Authorities had compelled him to take his sons with him, when the relief ended.

* * *

Quite naturally, according to the existing Poor Law system, the Poor Law Authorities then washed their hands of both father and children. For this, which is what the Local Government Board and the C.O.S. recommend, they were sternly rebuked by the judge. "The callousness of this case," he said, "was not only with the prisoner, but also with the Parochial Authorities of the parish to which these children belonged. He had to say—and he believed that in doing so he was speaking for the jury as well as himself—that it was a scandal that when the relations between this man and his children ended, these two unfortunate boys should be allowed to disappear within the parish and no questions be asked, and no thought be given to them. . . . The Parochial Authorities should know that they had a duty beyond avoiding expenses of maintenance . . . they had a duty to the paupers for whom they were responsible, and most especially for helpless dependants." But it is exactly this irresponsibility for "helpless dependants" of the parent who chooses to leave the workhouse that Mr. Burns's new Order will perpetuate, unless the Prime Minister interferes. The whole responsibility for these "children of the State" ought to be transferred to the Education Authorities. But in the meantime is Mr. Burns to be allowed to confirm the Guardians in their practice of washing their hands of destitute children the moment the parents leave the workhouse?

XUM

SIR EDWARD CARSON'S "NO"

AS we read the speech delivered by Sir Edward Carson at Newry on Wednesday last we could not help being reminded of a recitation greatly in favour at Sunday-school entertainments in the days of our childhood, entitled "Have courage, my boy, to say 'No.'" Sir Edward has been saying nothing but "No" for years. He could no more say "Yes," we feel, than he could speak Chinese. That is why he is such a hero in Ulster. Ulster is the land of the Everlasting No. She finds saying "No" the easiest solution of most problems—religious, political, and social. She has half an idea that "No Home Rule" is the shibboleth which will finally pass you into Heaven. Now it is a very good thing to be able to say "No" to the Devil, whether he appears in the form of bad whisky, or starvation wages, or interference with liberty of thought or speech. And if Ulster were defying any old Devil just now except the evil bogey of her own sectarianised imagination, we should all be with her down to the laces in our boots. But she is not. Her "No"—if we may use a Biblical comparison which she will understand—is the "No" of Pharaoh. It is the "No" of ascendency, of men who have hardened their hearts against the liberation of some hundreds of thousands of their fellow-creatures. There you have the only "Ulster question" that matters. It is not really a question: it is an answer. But it is an answer so opposed to common sense and so lacking in an elementary knowledge of facts that if a schoolboy were to give anything resembling it at an examination he would not get a single mark. Ulster, however, is like a self-willed little schoolboy who, if history and arithmetic proved his answers wrong, would exclaim "Hang history! Hang arithmetic!" History, arithmetic, the British Empire, Ireland—she will let them all go hang rather than admit that she is wrong to the extent of a dot or a comma. This is, so far as we can judge, the only serious obstacle there is to Lord Loreburn's proposal for a conference which might settle the Home Rule question on lines of general consent. Ulster simply declines to come into a conference. She wants not a settlement, but a victory. Her terms are unconditional surrender:

> The crown of the causeway in every street
> And the Papishes under my feet.

This is unreason to the *n*th power. It is one of the most ridiculous spectacles to be seen in the politics of contemporary Europe.

This being so, it may be thought that we despair of a happy solution of the Home Rule question. Nothing could be further from the truth. We are firmly convinced that a happy solution is to be found, and that, even if Lord Loreburn's idea of a conference comes to nothing at present, it will bear fruit before twelve months are over, and will result in the discovery of a plan which will enable Irishmen of all creeds and classes to live as happily ever afterwards as it is in their nature to do. Obviously the Ulster "No" will have to be modified in regard to Home Rule, as it was modified on previous occasions in regard to Catholic Emancipation and Church Disestablishment. Ulster has never yet gone on saying "No" to the incoming tide when once the water has got as high as her knees. Hers is above all a practical genius, and though she has little common sense of speech, she is rich in the common sense of action. Her politics only seem hopeless to us because she has handed them over to her growers of catchwords instead of to her growers of corn—to her makers of speeches instead of to her makers of ships and linen. We know no community in which politics are so little concerned with the daily bread of the people, but are taken simply as a stimulant, and preferably undiluted at that. Thus Ulster politics do not represent Ulster interests or Ulster workaday intelligence to any degree. They do, no doubt, represent the "To Hell with the Pope" gaieties with which Ulster amuses herself in moments when she is not attending to business. But they have never come to grips with a single big fact in the history of the Union. Consequently, when we think of a settlement of Home Rule by consent, we think of a settlement made less by Ulster politicians than by those who stand for the ordinary interests of the Ulster people. Those who know Ulster know that she says very different things in private from what she says in public. They know that, even if there is a fairly big mass of the people behind the bloody campaign preached by the politicians, there is also a considerable host of reasonable Ulstermen who admit that they hope to defeat Home Rule by shouting, but who believe that Home Rule is infinitely preferable to an Ulster wasted by riots such as are likely to happen if Sir Edward Carson and Captain Craig remain in command. This kind of Unionist, though he has little influence on the public opinion of Ulster, is fairly representative of private opinion. It is he, rather than Sir Edward Carson, who speaks for the great business interests and the farmers, for the doctors and, to a great extent, for the clergy. As soon as he is certain that the Liberal Government really means to push the Home Rule Bill through—a thing which, oddly enough, he seems to find it next door to impossible to believe—his mind will at once begin to work towards schemes of compromise. Sir Edward Carson knows very well from the subscription lists of his Party in the north of Ireland that Ulster has no more intention of financing a revolution than she has of planning an expedition to the moon. She will no doubt do a variety of weird things, even to acquiescing in the setting up of a sort of Provisional Government. But her business men have lately been more intent upon the extension of their businesses than upon constitution-building; and, as soon as the Provisional Government shows itself to be a stumbling-block to business, either by its failure to keep street violence in check or by playing puerile games with some great business institution like the Post Office, there will be an organised reaction towards common sense which will surprise some of the honest but light-headed people who have been dressing themselves up in the cast-off clothes of the United Irishmen.

For ourselves, we wish this common sense could be brought into action before blood has been spilled in the streets. But we must regretfully admit that the time for common sense and conference does not yet appear to be ripe. Some time ago a number of moderate men met in Dublin in the hope of arranging a conference

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that would do for Home Rule what Captain Shawe-Taylor's conference did for the land question. The conference which settled the land question—or, at any rate, which led to the passing of the Wyndham Act—was composed, it is worth remembering, not of official members of either the Nationalist party or the landlord party, but of simple and unrepresentative and conciliatory men. The landlords in public meeting assembled denounced it, and Mr. Dillon and his friends held aloof. None the less, it quietly went on with its work, drew up its report and, as it were, made the laws over Lord Clanricarde's and Mr. Dillon's heads. Could such a conference be summoned at the present crisis it would be of infinite value. That such a conference will be summoned at the last moment we have not the slightest doubt. Mr. Redmond may not sit on it, and Sir Edward Carson will probably apply to it his pet adjective, "nefarious." But that will not matter. It will be the parliament of an intelligence that has never yet been able to express itself through ordinary party channels. Such a conference, to our mind, would be much more important than a conference chiefly composed of Front-Bench leaders. It would be less influenced by considerations of party gain and loss, and more bent upon finding an honest way out of the present difficulty. That a way out can be found is obvious to every reasonable man. There are ninety-nine alternatives to the present Home Rule Bill, any one of which Ulster could have had, and could still have, for the asking. But she has gone on pig-headedly believing that she would be able to preserve things as they are—the hundredth alternative, which Ireland, Great Britain, and the British Empire in one voice declare to be intolerable. We ourselves suggested a scheme by which the four Unionist counties might be left out of the Home Rule Bill and formed into an English county under English administration and English laws. But Ulster's tastes apparently do not lie that way. Mr. Erskine Childers, again, proposed an excellent scheme, according to which Ireland would be given a constitution like that of Canada, with a national parliament sitting in Dublin, and subordinate provincial assemblies. This also met with no response. Ulster, as a matter of fact, does not want to be definitely either a part of England or a part of Ireland: she does not even want to govern herself. She simply wants to maintain the present anomalous position, which keeps her from feeling nervous about the Pope, and puts her on a pleasant little throne of ascendency over the politics both of Great Britain and Ireland. This, of course, cannot be permitted. If Ulster has no alternative but this to offer to the present Home Rule Bill, then the Bill must go through as it is, and the consequences will be on Ulster's head. On the other hand, if Ulster has the courage to say something more original than "No," she can have all the freedom she desires from interference from the Dublin Parliament. She can be as independent a part of Ireland as British Columbia is of Canada, and everybody knows how complete that independence is. She can have her own police, her own education, and all the rest of it, if she cares. Let her be given every chance of saying whether she does care, in conference either with the rest of Ireland or with British and Irish politicians combined. She ought, we believe, to be given the offer of such a conference now, even if there is little prospect of her accepting it. She will do nothing, we fear, however, until the Home Rule Bill is actually passed. She will then find herself forced either to submit to the new Act as it is or to join in a conference for amending it on British-Columbian lines. By not conferring in time, she is simply laying up for herself a season of rioting and revolver shooting. If she likes it best that way, however, perhaps it is not for us to complain.

SUCCESSFUL COLLECTIVISM

FIFTY years ago the position and prospects of Political Democracy throughout the world were such as to make the boldest democrat hold his breath. Across the Atlantic, in the world's greatest republic, north and south were in the grips of mortal fight. Across the Channel, amid the glitter of a meretricious court, repression sat enthroned. Lancashire in stoic silence was enduring all the horrors of the Cotton Famine. In that year, and in that place—unmentioned by the *Times*, unknown to the Government or the professors of political economy, and unrecorded in the *Annual Register*—was founded what has proved to be the largest, the most successful, and financially the most important of Industrial Democracies. There is something very characteristic about the remarkable volume by the publication of which the Co-operative Wholesale Society is this month celebrating its jubilee. In *The Story of the C.W.S.* (Co-operative Wholesale Society, Ltd., 1 Balloon Street, Manchester, 1913), Mr. Percy Redfern, himself one of the workers in and one of the products of the Co-operative Movement, describes with real literary skill and scientific acumen the origin, the struggles, the growth, and the achievements of this gigantic society. His admirable volume of 439 pages, nearly a hundred original illustrations, and three statistical diagrams has been written, printed, illustrated, bound, and published by the Co-operative Wholesale Society itself for itself in the persons of its twenty thousand employees and its two million members. The Society does not pay even so much regard to the outside world as, on the title page, to put the name in full! The "C.W.S." is, indeed, known not only all over Great Britain, but all over the world. But it is not the world of capitalists, cabinet ministers, and courts, nor even that of librarians or literary reviewers. For which reason we go out of our way to invite to this book the very serious attention of every public library, every economic professor, and, we may add, of every honest student of democratic collectivism throughout the civilised world. It is very interesting to read, full of new matter, and well worth pondering over.

What did these few hundreds of unlettered artisans set out to do? What they met for, in the disused railway arch at Knott Mill, Manchester, and then in an Ancoats slum, over a "sixpenny tea," was simply to take a step forward in their attempt to bring all industry under democratic control. They saw that, throughout the civilised world, industry was in the hands of the owners of capital, who used the power which this ownership gave them (and *incidentally* thereby remu-

nerated themselves for the service of direction that they fulfilled) to keep for themselves an enormous share of the produce. The co-operators were assured (there are quite excellent people who believe it to this day!) that this ownership of industry by individual capitalists—and therefore the profits that they exacted—represented the only way in which the job could possibly be done. They were asked to consider—much as the "foolish Socialists" are asked to consider to-day—how the complicated business of the world could be carried on without the initiative, the resourcefulness, the science, the thrift, the foresight, the insight, and the taste that the capitalist class is good enough to place at the disposal of the mass of the people. These cotton operatives and engineers, these carpenters and carpet weavers were not convinced. They had already, between 1844 and 1863, created in their hundreds of little Co-operative Societies a democratic organisation which had successfully ousted the little shopkeeper, with his adulterations and his profits. They had proved that their elected committees and modestly-paid managers could do things quite efficiently without the shopkeeper's initiative, resourcefulness, etc. They now proceeded, in their simple, homely way, by the same machinery of an Association of Consumers and by the same constitutional device of "dividend on purchase" instead of on capital, to eliminate the wholesale dealer and bring the mysterious operations out of which he had hitherto amassed a fortune under the direction and control of the tens of thousands of store customers. In Mr. Redfern's vivid pages we see this working-class Democracy, with its hierarchy of artisan committees elected *quarter by quarter* at open meetings of all the membership, going silently and almost unobserved from success to success. By 1872 it was serving a community of over a hundred thousand families; its annual turnover was just upon a million sterling, and it was already beginning to do its own importing, by its own salaried servants in other lands. The next step was to dispense with the capitalist manufacturer and the capitalist banker. In that year the C.W.S. started its own banking department, which now has over five million pounds of deposits on current accounts, with an annual turnover rapidly approaching twenty millions sterling. The same year saw started the making of boots and of biscuits; a modest venture which has grown into the manufacture of literally hundreds of different commodities of popular use and consumption, to the extent of nearly eight million pounds annually. The C.W.S. has now the largest boot factory and the largest corn mill in the kingdom, and altogether fifty separate productive works, giving constant employment to 20,000 operatives. Having to this extent eliminated the capitalist manufacturer (and incidentally also the capitalist printer, the capitalist boxmaker, the capitalist repairer, and so on), the only further step was to get back to Mother Earth, and eliminate the capitalist farmer and planter. In 1896 the C.W.S. bought its first agricultural estate in England, chiefly in order to grow fruit for its own jam factory; and in 1902 its first plantations in Ceylon, where its two million members now grow tea, by their own employees, for what has become an enormous annual consumption. It is said that a curious Chancellor of the Exchequer once asked what was the largest amount paid in customs duties on a single transaction; to be not a little astonished at the reply that the biggest figure was reached by a society of working men, of which he had never heard! Incidentally, it was the Co-operative Movement more than anything else that prevented England from succumbing to the "Tariff Reform" propaganda. These thirty thousand committeemen, dispersed among fifteen hundred societies, casting among their members probably two millions of votes, are themselves actually payers of customs duties and keenly aware of their effect on prices. It is impossible to persuade a Co-operative Committeeman that an import duty is borne by the foreign exporter. He declines to put a tax on his own purchases; purchases which now reach annually, through the C.W.S. alone, an aggregate total of thirty millions sterling—the largest general supply business in the world, still entirely managed, under the most democratic constitution that has ever existed, by committeemen and managers belonging to the working class.

The question arises, to whom do the profits of this huge business accrue, and what do they amount to? The answer is paradoxical. There are no profits in the ordinary sense. The business belongs exclusively to its customers, the fifteen hundred Co-operative Societies. These customers take up shares in proportion to their several memberships. On this share capital interest is paid at a fixed rate. The business is carried on solely with the object of fulfilling the customers' needs. There is no motive for charging any price higher than just enough to cover the actual expenses of manufacture and supply. What happens, in practice, is that selling prices are fixed, for the sake of safety, so as to permit of very liberal depreciation, the accumulation of substantial reserve and insurance funds, and the return to the purchasing societies of a "dividend" of fourpence in the pound on all they have purchased. If the "dividend" is higher than this rebate or discount of $1\frac{2}{3}$ per cent., the shareholders' meeting of this unique trading concern denounces its directors for making too large profits!

It is a fascinating subject for speculation to what extent this leviathan of business under working-class management is likely to grow. Is there anything that this democratic organisation in the hands of the plain men from the lathe and the mill cannot eventually accomplish? The student will infer, perhaps with surprise, that it is not the lack of administrative ability, the power of command, or the instinct for business, that will set the limit. The very form of their organisation, the very motives for their transactions, render needless most of the wonderful ability by which the great captains of industry amass their fortunes. The successive generations of elected committeemen, choosing departmental managers of their own class and character, have proved themselves, for fifty years, equal to every emergency. The very volume before us is testimony to the intellectual ability that the British working class, through the Co-operative Movement, throws up. We believe that the limits are set only by the nature of the constitution itself. The democratic organisation of

industry by voluntary associations of consumers can apply only to the commodities needed by these consumers; and as this particular form attracts only the better paid, wage-earning artisan class, its possible business is limited to the amount of their expenditure. This, apart from rent, railway and tramway fares, newspapers and alcohol, does not amount to one-fifth of the total national income or production. This does not mean, however, that Collectivism need stop there. Great as is the magnitude of the Co-operative business, it represents only one-tenth of the total already rescued from capitalist ownership. To bring under democratic control the larger part of the business of the country, we have still available the successful form of Association of Consumers; but, perforce, its other variety, the collectivity of the parish, district, borough, or county council, the province and the State.

THE PROSPECTS OF FRENCH FEMINISM

WITHIN the past year the French Press has devoted considerable space to the task of eliciting the ideas of the rising generation. The method adopted by the *Temps*, the *Revue Hebdomadaire*, and other important periodicals has been a series of "enquêtes," or enquiries, to which the youth of France was invited to respond. All classes were represented, although there was the inevitable preponderance of brain-workers over those engaged in manual labour. In fact, the working classes, in the conventional sense of the term, were not heard. Art, literature, medicine, agriculture, engineering, the army and navy, are a few of the subdivisions of a typical "enquiry." Each class or interest was represented by a presumably authoritative spokesman, there being often more than one when the class obviously demanded a more diversified expression. In every case the writer was expected to summarise not merely his own views, but also those common to the group to which he belonged. Thus it was possible to obtain an idea of the opinions current in the university, the workshop, and in society on general questions of a political, religious, and social character. Much of this material has since been collected into book form, such as *Les jeunes Gens d'aujourd'hui* and *A quoi rêvent les jeunes Gens*, and has been widely commented upon both here and in France. One can only hope that the picture it gives is not a fair one, and that the average young Frenchman is something better than the reactionary *phraseur* his friends have represented.

It is more interesting to turn to the enquiry which has just been concluded in the *Revue Hebdomadaire*. After the young men had been questioned, attention was turned to the young women. For the first time in French history that inarticulate personage *la jeune fille* has been given an opportunity of self-expression, and, on the whole, the result has been unexpectedly satisfactory. So far as both have been revealed by these enquiries, the mentality of the young girl seems much fuller of promise than that of her male contemporary. Women doctors, teachers, typists, shop assistants, nuns, and even *mondaines* have come forward to speak on behalf of their sex. There is a distinct note of revolt in most of the replies, except those from the nuns, the *mondaines*, and the teachers in the *enseignement libre*, or religious schools. There is a noticeable absence of that sentimental chauvinism and vague religiosity which characterised the replies of the youths, most of whom were suffering from ill-digested Bergsonism. The women, on the contrary, are struggling to attain some degree of individuality, and in the process have developed a healthy faculty of criticism. So long as they were cut off from all participation in human activity they did not realise fully the bondage of the peculiar conditions imposed on them in France. The French father still tries desperately to retain his daughter as an *article de luxe*, as a non-producer, but the stress of economic conditions and the long-resisted pressure of external ideas are rendering this increasingly difficult. The middle-class girl has become a worker, and, as such, she is naturally revolting against a state of things essentially and peculiarly hostile to the development of women.

It has been the traditional privilege of France to ridicule the insularity and prudery of the English, and to enjoy a reputation for freedom from conventionality. The account given by some of these young women of their struggles and humiliations to secure even an elementary freedom throws an interesting light upon this point. Whatever Frenchmen may imagine of themselves, it is clear that the modern Frenchwoman has no illusions as to their supposed susceptibility to ideas and their intellectual courage. She points out that the French father has not yet lost the Early Victorian idea that it is unladylike, even improper, for his daughter to earn her living. So widespread, indeed, is this superstition that we have M. Marcel Prévost developing it into the monstrous generalisation that the Englishwoman who goes to France as a governess must be an evil moral influence! The independent woman must be of doubtful morals—otherwise, why should she leave her parents? Where such ideas are prevalent it is not astonishing that there should be many complaints of the attitude of men towards women who are without a guardian of some sort. Now that she is becoming a human being the Frenchwoman seems less ready to testify to the legendary gallantry of her countrymen.

These enquiries have at least made it clear that the enemy is the French family system. Almost every reply points to the family as the root of all the difficulties and all the evils which obstruct the path of the young woman. In France the home is not a sentimental ideal, but a too solid reality from which children find it difficult to escape. The very desire to do so is regarded as essentially wicked, and, in the case of a young girl, positively indecent. Even when a long struggle has resulted in the concession of some measure of independence there still lingers a regret in the minds of parents. They cling to their ideal of womanhood as an inexperienced, over-sexed young girl, who has been sedulously debarred from all contact with persons or ideas, pending the time when they shall have secured, by a process of interparental bargaining, a son-in-law in the shape of a gentleman anxious to settle down. Such are the conditions against which the modern woman is reacting.

In the case of the men there was a determined anti-

intellectual note running through the replies of all the contributors, and a wealth of rhetoric relating to the sacredness of hearth and home and the precious legacy of the past. The women, however, are decidedly individualistic, critical, and anti-traditional. They are further distinguished by a social conscience, of which there was no trace in the young men. There is the constantly expressed desire to engage actively in the work of the community and to contribute to the sum of human thought and happiness. Their eyes are not turned "towards the East" like those of the Nationalist youths who talked so much of the "revanche," but are directed to the problems of the life around them. They are more concerned with this world than with the remoter questions of the next. Here, again, the enquiries reveal a remarkable difference between the two sexes. In most of the women's replies the religious question was met by a simple confession of agnosticism or evaded by a vague assent to general practice. It was clearly regarded as a matter of secondary importance, a significant fact in view of all that has been said about the Catholic revival in France. If this Catholicism be anything more than a literary current, then the men are returning to a Church which the women have deserted—a curious reversal of the normal process.

France has not been associated with any pronounced phase of the feminist movement. The cry of "Votes for women" has not yet been raised, nor does there appear to be any immediate prospect of its being heard. The champions of the women's cause have concentrated upon a demand for equal freedom in sexual matters, which has rather side-tracked the movement, and done perhaps more harm than good. For all his affectation of contempt for English puritanism, the average Frenchman is essentially bourgeois and respectable, and could not be expected to regard with equanimity the impassioned appeals of certain women writers for complete freedom in the conduct of their love affairs. The effect of these incorrigibly sentimental effusions has been to make of feminism a word with which to conjure up visions of innumerable George Sands, smoking their pipes, and changing their lovers, to the utter desolation of the sacred *foyer!*

The first task of the French feminists is to create between parents and children a normal human relationship to take the place of the slavish submission which most parents still demand. Some of the young women who have been expressing their views in such unmistakable terms are well qualified for the task. They have recognised already that what Frenchmen are suffering from is in reality an aggravated form of *la pudeur anglaise*. All the repressive measures of which the women complain are obviously the outcome of the puritanical spirit. There is the same distrust of human nature, the same belief that liberty means licence. It is clear from this enquiry that the younger women feel keenly their false position, and know the foundations which they must attack if a more healthy social structure is to be erected. That they should have been interrogated is in itself a hopeful sign, marking a departure from the traditional policy of ignoring *la jeune fille*. The young girl in France is no longer contented to be a mere cypher. She has seized this first opportunity to reveal herself as something quite different from the legendary figure of French literature. Whether the reality will be more acceptable than the ideal is doubtful, as far as the average Frenchman is concerned, but his education may safely be left to the women themselves. They will see to it that he becomes more civilised.

E. A. B.

SCIENCE AND SUPERSTITION

DURING the past week the eyes of several million readers have doubtless been drawn to headlines and jottings in the halfpenny Press on the subject of "beardless women." The general attitude of most people is probably that adopted by Sir Hugh Evans towards the disguised Falstaff: "I like not when a 'oman has a great peard." But the special point of the newspaper paragraphs has been the evolution of that human beauty which now surrounds us, as a result of the conjugal habits of the anthropoid ape, and his conjectured preference for beardless spouses —a sort of anti-capillary attraction. In such brief extracts is science retailed to the masses. Such is the form into which the wisdom of the British Association is chopped up for the daily reader. We cannot but quote, from a leading organ of Liberal opinion, a passage on the British Association transactions which shows the method at its purest: "The cause of the entente between man and the dog and the reason women have no whiskers were other matters brought to light. *One of the great questions of the day, the cost of living, particularly to the poor, also found a place in the proceedings.*" We have contributed nothing but the italics to this perfection.

Similar instances are everywhere. It will be remembered that some time ago the remnants of a curious and very ancient skull were brought to light. Eminent scientists, like the lecturer in Bret Harte's poem,

> reconstructed there
> From those same bones an animal that
> was extremely rare

—in fact, a candidate for the post of missing link. The reconstruction was not unanimously accepted by experts, but it offered a pretty field for speculation. Now mark its fortune in the people's Press. This tongueless yet eloquent skull, fit subject for both poetry and science, chapless, like the one in *Hamlet*, and knocked about the mazzard with the spade of sexton Time, prognathous, exalted with epithets, tricked out in all the finery of "long-tailed words in -osity and -ation," appeared in the newspapers as "Prehistoric Suffragette." Alas, poor Mrs. Yorick!

The smart, the grotesque, the minute, the out-of-a-context—anything that can by any device of sub-editing be made to cajole the public fancy into a momentary interest—these are the crumbs left over from the feast of science to the mass of common men. Prolonged attention is neither asked nor given; to outline the arguments of the thinkers, even when these are least technical, would be to present a cheque at the bank of thought, and the halfpenny newspaper assumes—far too lightly, we believe—that such a cheque would certainly be dishonoured. It prefers to provide, and the public can do nothing but accept, the most casual by-product

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or the most unsupported conclusion. "Great Scientist declares his faith in a Future Life" is a cry to bring comfort to hundreds of thousands of suburban homes; few seem to suspect its horrid meaninglessness, fewer still to "spier," as Stevenson did of the beggar-wife,

> The reason o' the cause an' the wherefore o' the why.

It is painfully easy to see the commercial merits of this sort of journalism. Most people have too little leisure, too little spare energy, for the austerer pleasures of the intellect—a simple fact which vitiates Mr. Arnold Bennett's teaching in his brilliant pamphlet, *How to Live on Twenty-four Hours a Day*. The tired brain that would vomit forth any logical sequence of thought forced into it will digest an isolated assertion, especially if spiced with superlatives and peppered with marks of exclamation. Moreover, we are all afraid of thoroughness. We will not dive to the bottom of the well for fear of finding there the naked truth. A little knowledge may be a dangerous thing, but it is the kind of fire we like to play with. Information cut into stock lengths will suit all mental statures. Rolled into pellets and flicked at random, it will find its mark—which is to say, its market. The "things not generally known" are the things most easily believed.

Again, marvellous as the inventions of science are, it cannot be denied that to the superficial glance the marvel is diminished by explanation. And the public, if we are to accept the evident opinion of the halfpenny Press, wants no such diminution. It prefers astrology to astronomy and alchemy to chemistry. Not long ago, when Professor Collie outlined to a learned society the result of his researches in certain elements, one would have judged from some of the newspaper reports that he had, quite simply and literally, found the philosopher's stone. There would almost certainly be an opening for an impostor who was willing to presume on such credulity, apportioning to the public the Midas ears and to himself the Midas touch. If we compare the tale of the *Canon's Yeoman* in Chaucer with Ben Jonson's *Alchemist*, we may profess ourselves surprised at the resemblance—at the smallness of the change in superstition brought about by the tenscore years and more that had elapsed between the two works. But here we are, another three centuries on, and do we find ourselves so much better than our ancestors? Says the Canon's Yeoman:

> To mochel folk we doon illusion,
> And borwe gold, be it a pound or two,
> Or ten, or twelve, or many sommes mo,
> And make hem wenen, at the leeste weye,
> That of a pound we coude make tweye!
> Yet is it fals.

A certain Dr. Simon Forman (possibly the original of Jonson's Alchemist) was very successful as a sort of Bond Street practitioner in "the spacious times of great Elizabeth" and the somewhat less spacious times of James—that James who was himself author of a fanatical work on *Daemonologie*. Dr. Forman, something of a first-nighter and man-about-town, was, according to Sir Anthony Weldon, "a very silly fellow, yet had wit enough to cheat Ladies and other women, by pretending skill in telling their Fortunes." He practised medicine and sought the philosopher's stone. Magistrates and the College of Physicians got him several times into prison for quackery, until the University of Cambridge, oddly enough, conferred upon him the degree of M.D. But not all the degrees in the gift of the university could have made his magic lawful. The Countess of Essex procured from him a love-philtre and what we may perhaps call a hate-philtre (this latter for use upon her husband only). Dr. Forman's final triumph was to prophesy his own death for a certain day, and on that day to die, leaving behind him a reputation unsavoury in various ways, and the record of success in an illegal calling—now, as then, illegal, but now, as then, pursued with success.

Mountebanks and fortune-tellers still find no difficulty in luring to their dens "Ladies and other women, by pretending skill in telling their Fortunes," by undertaking to straighten their noses and their matrimonial entanglements, or to give them tips for the Derby. So we seem almost driven back to original sin, the corruption of man's heart, to explain the evil of snippetty science, and the ease with which credulity passes over into superstition. For if many like their mental meals short and sharp because their minds are strained and their bodies tired, others would seem to be in like case because their bodies are idle and their minds unused. The disease being double, the remedy, if there is a remedy, must be double too—more leisure for the overworked and more education for all. An era of large and free and thorough discussion is not really beyond the bounds of human hope, or even of human history. For did not Athens enjoy such an era? It is true that the Athenians of all ages were, like ourselves, perpetually eager for some new thing; but, for at any rate a considerable period, they were willing to test the novelty with dialectic and to consider the claims of highly metaphysical abstractions. It is true, too, that even Plato would scornfully have excluded great numbers of his fellow-creatures from so much as the chance of education and would have made short work of the halfpenny Press. Editors, like poets, he would have conducted to the borders of his republic—only without crowning them with flowers. But that was because he was born and bred in the briar-patch of a servile State, and so could not conceive of a genuine equality. Somebody had to do the dirty work, even in an ideal community. But the slaves of the future will be machines, and all we humans shall be free to discuss everything as profoundly and interminably as we desire, whether by the oratorical methods of the Sophists and the British Association or by the meticulous conversational procedure of Socrates. The vision grows.

> A brighter Hellas rears its mountains
> From waves serener far.

The fog of our climate and our intellect is withered up, and beneath the blue sky, as once from the Peiræus, so now up from St. Paul's and along Fleet Street, stroll the philosophers in full argumentative blast. Their speculations are not in stocks and shares; their only business is the quest of truth. None of your mere Glaucons either, but, beside the queer frog-face and burly figure of Socrates, walk Plato, broad-browed as Pallas herself, and the young laughing Alcibiades!

But much of the problem will remain. For the way in which Plato recorded the Socratic talks will not be an altogether safe guide for the sub-editors of the future.

THE STATE AND THE FARMER IN AUSTRALIA

FEDERAL ROYAL COMMISSION'S REPORT.

MELBOURNE, *July 24th*, 1913.

ALL political parties in Australia to-day are pledged to Collectivism as the policy to apply to the lot of the farmer. The interpretations of it are somewhat amusing at times, and the term Collectivism is never used by either the Liberal or Labour governments who practise the policy, for it is an accepted superstition in this vast land of lonely distances and sepulchral eucalyptus stumps that the farmer sees red whenever Socialism or Collectivism are mentioned in his presence. All the same, from daylight to dark the average Australian farmer is levered up and maintained in a standing position in every State by a vast network of more or less intelligently constructed Collectivist machinery. The farmer does not always realise how much he owes to this machinery, and is inclined to say things in a very rude fashion when he is asked to sign a Rural Worker's Log or pay decent wages to his imported British or native-born Australian labourers as some sort of return for cheap money through the Crédit Foncier System, cheap land through closer settlement laws of the land tax, cheap freights on State-owned railways, very cheap rural telephones from a national post office, cheap barbed wire from State netting works, free seed, advice and inspection from State Agricultural Departments, the loan of implements from State irrigation Commissioners, cheap refrigerating accommodation in State-owned cool stores—to mention only a few of the benefits Collectivism confers upon him. But without it he would be as putty in the hands of unscrupulous middlemen, a helpless child in the hands of the banks and the wealthy landowners and the mortgage companies which still flourish amazingly in this lusty young democracy.

Perhaps the latest and most interesting illustration of the acceptance by all Australian political parties of the Collectivist policy as a policy for the agricultural community is afforded by the reports now before me of the Federal Royal Commission on the Production, Distribution, Marketing and Exportation of Fruit. The reports represent the views of four Labour members who present a majority document, and three Liberal members of Parliament who submit minority conclusions. The Labour Commissioners make very interesting recommendations for wide extensions of Collectivism in the fruit industry and the sale and distribution of its products in London, the British provinces, and on the Continent. I will return to one or two of them later. The Liberal Commissioners decline to follow the majority in some of the most important of these extensions, and deny that the monopoly of freight space on the steamers serving the British market, secured by a few firms and denounced by their colleagues, is the injurious thing described in the majority report. The specially interesting feature of their report, however, is the extent to which they, too, are prepared to use the associated power of the community to do things for the fruit grower and exporter which the average Britisher would leave to the tender mercies of private enterprise and individual bargaining. Here is a list of some of the recommendations common to both Labour and Liberal Commissioners—I have in some cases used my own language to make the points clearer to British readers:

(1) That special trains equipped with refrigerated or louvred cars be provided on the railways for fruit transport.

(2) That the export trade be obliged to use a uniform Australian fruit case, and that the inter-State trade be forbidden the use of any but new cases.

(3) That the steamship companies be required to carry self-registering thermometers in all insulated fruit chambers, and be obliged by law to provide ventilated storage accommodation for fruit on all inter-State steamers.

(4) That a Commonwealth Agricultural Bureau be established at an early date.

(5) That State-owned cold storage depots be established at railway termini and ports of export. (The Liberals would prefer a liberal subsidy to co-operative companies, but, failing these, demand State-erected and controlled depots.)

(6) That orchards affected with pests be in certain circumstances compulsorily resumed till the pest is stamped out.

(7) That Commonwealth Trade Commissioners develop the sale of Australian fruit in Germany and other foreign markets.

(8) That the export of inferior or unsound fruit be prohibited through the officers of the Commerce and Customs branches of the National Government's service.

That there should be such a measure of Collectivism common to both parties in the National Legislature is significant of much—so much that the purely party division of opinion on the remainder of the recommendations may be discounted.

The grip of the middleman on the Australian export trade is a very serious matter to Australian producers, and is making converts to the Labour Party in all rural districts. The evidence before this Commission shows that one firm in Victoria controls between 50 per cent. and 60 per cent. of the space for fruit on the steamers serving the British market; and that in Tasmania quite 90 per cent. of the shipping space is in the hands of two firms, and no producer can get to the Home market without their co-operation. To meet this situation and also to strengthen the official Labour policy propaganda the Labour Commissioners recommend the running of a Commonwealth Government line of steamers to Europe. Unfortunately, however, they have worked out no details. They say:—

> We are of opinion that the establishment of a line of steamers owned and controlled by the Federal Government, equipped with the most up-to-date system of refrigeration, would be of great benefit to the industry. Incidentally, it would break down the space monopoly, and thereby restore to the growers freedom of action as to whom they should consign their fruit shipments.

This is all very well, but the Australian producer demands a scheme or, at any rate, the framework of a scheme. The consequence is the Liberal Commissioners have little difficulty in scaring off the new departure; and their case gains strength from the fact that the Collectivist Fruit Export Department of the South Australian Government has not been able to secure so good terms for its clients from the Shipping Ring as private enterprise in other States. The Labour Commissioners, nevertheless, have the support of the veteran Liberal Minister for Agriculture in the State of Victoria, Mr. George Graham.

Co-operative enterprise in Australian rural industries is making rapid strides, though in fruit it is still in its infancy and runs the risk of being strangled by "co-operative companies," which are really a resurrection of the middleman with a new prospectus and some new friends. The Labour Commissioners in their report utter a useful word of warning in this connection:

> The outlook is not encouraging so far as concerns the true co-operative ideal embodying the principle which gives equal representation to all shareholders. We would advise growers to embark with caution in any so-called co-operative association wherein the principle of one shareholder one vote is not embodied. We are of opinion that the Government could with advantage act as co-operative agent for the growers and consumers, and accomplish the whole of the work of wholesale distribution.

Here again the Commissioners are in advance of the times and lack a businesslike detailed scheme. But the whole trend of thought in this country is with them, and once a National Agricultural Bureau is established the federation will press ahead with Collectivist action on behalf of the producer. As I write a scheme is being matured for the better utilisation of the parcels-post system for the despatch of parcels of butter, fruit, eggs, game, etc. Australia, like South Africa, is resolved that packets of perishable rural produce shall be handled by the Post Office as well as letters, papers, and non-perishable parcels.

M. H.

DISCIPLINE AND ORGANISATION IN INDUSTRY.—III.

A FEW months ago we were faced by the possibility of another railway strike. A guard on the Midland, named Mr. Richardson, was discharged because he refused to obey the orders of an inspector. It was frankly admitted that the inspector's orders were contrary to the rules and regulations framed by the company in the interests of public safety, but the directors claimed that they must be allowed to discipline their own men. Orders from superior officers were to be obeyed, no matter what the possible consequences might be.

After the usual discussion and Press campaign the company gave way, and Richardson was reinstated. But the men had not threatened to strike merely to get Richardson his job back. They protested against "discipline," and asked for organisation, for they declared that if rules were to be flouted by the officials of the company, then it was only due to the workers to give them something in the place of rules. In short' they asked that fresh rules should be made whenever the inspectors chose to scrap the old ones, and that they should be relieved from responsibility for any accidents due to the arbitrary authority of their officers. This point also was conceded. Inspectors on the Midland must now give instructions in writing whenever they order men to work contrary to rules and regulations.

If this were merely an isolated case it would perhaps not be of such vital importance, but it is not. Taking the railways as a whole, it is safe to say that in no other industry in the kingdom is there the same bitter feeling of resentment towards the employers. Nominally the era of sweet reasonableness has been ushered in; "conciliation" is the order of the day; but in actual fact large numbers of railwaymen are cursing the word which, six years ago, was to act as a salve for all their sores. And nearly all this is due to that travesty of organisation which railway directors and high officials have named discipline.

Turn back the pages of the history of railway agitation to the All Grades Movement of 1906, and what do we find? We find first of all a National Programme of hours and wages, a demand which scarcely anyone, employer or employee, who understood the question of railway working expected then to materialise. But besides this there was a claim for "recognition." Every discontented railwayman then expected, and every discontented railwayman now wants, an escape from the bitter "discipline" to which he is subjected. If anyone objects to this statement of the position, let him consider the companies' reply to the men's request that the union officials should be recognised as the negotiating agents between the men and the companies. The very words used by the directors and the journals representing the companies were that the granting of recognition to the unions would be "subversive of discipline."

Well, recognition was not granted. The men's leaders were prevailed upon to accept the conciliation scheme, and what happened then? There was more discipline. The hosts of inspectors and foremen were increased. Such things as the system of control were inaugurated—the system which is responsible for men having to perform certain tasks which are contrary to rules and regulations, and which led up to the Guard Richardson episode—and other methods which, quite naturally, are fostering a spirit of recklessness and hatred of existing forms of authority amongst the more intelligent section of railway workers. Ten years ago, as I know from personal experience, the bullying indulged in by petty officials was more resented than even the scandalous sweating then—as now—prevalent. And matters have gone from bad to worse.

The organisation of railway labour is not, of course, a simple matter. That it is infinitely more difficult than in most other industries everyone will readily admit. In one or two of the higher grades, such as the engine drivers, it would be possible to apportion the men's work with some expectation that it would be performed with machine-like regularity—if other things were equal. But in the lower grades the same does not

apply. In a large gang of passenger or goods porters it is not easy to apportion each man his task and say at the end of the day that he has, or has not, performed it to the best of his ability. The consequence is that, if there is not a desire for co-operation, for harmonious working between the members of the gangs in the lower grades, it is easy to delay work, or even do work so badly that it will lead to endless delays by having to be done over again. So other things seldom are equal for the higher grades. The slackness or mistakes of one section re-act on the others, and the whole system is disjointed.

Obviously what is wanted, then, is perfect organisation of the various units of the railway industrial army—and the organisation is far from perfect. Instead of well-planned schemes for getting the best out of the men—leaving aside all questions of payment or under-payment—the companies seem to depend upon the slave-driving propensities of their officials. The result is slackness in railway working, and sullen discontent among the men.

Since the Richardson affair one case has been pointed out to me where a guard was ordered by an official to take a double load with one brake-van, and when he refused the official taunted him with cowardice instead of providing the written instructions. In many cases no relief is provided when men are away on holiday, and the rest of the gang are forced to do the whole of the work. Recently a gang of four men were loading bales of machinery into a wagon; there was no crane near, so they asked for help. Whilst waiting for help an inspector came along and hounded them on to strain at lifting bales of from ten to twelve hundredweight over the high side of a big wagon.

Under the cloak of economy there is much petty tyranny. A low-paid grade of men on a certain section received notice recently that if any of them were absent from duty, owing to illness, up to Thursday in one week, they were not to be allowed to commence on the Friday, but were practically suspended until the following Monday. No reason was given for this action, the only one that suggested itself being that the company would save threepence upon a sick man's insurance, and he would be prevented from having the advantage of the short shift on a Saturday. Some time ago the cranemen on a certain section of a southern railway were by some means pushed out of the conciliation scheme, and all efforts to get them included again failed. Then they lost their annual leave, time and a half pay for Sunday work, and time and a quarter for other overtime. In return they were given an unsatisfactory sliding scale of wages. During the course of one day they would be put to three different kinds of work which was paid for at three different rates. Is it any wonder that there was considerable friction, or that disputes arose over the fractions of time given to the different work? And here again the request of the men was that their work should be "organised on sensible lines."

At Swansea a few weeks ago a strongly worded protest was passed unanimously by a crowded meeting of railway workers, hinting that a strike would be called if the "tyrannical and harassing methods adopted by all the local railway officials" were not dropped. One of the men stated in an interview: "When you find men promoted since the strike—from shunters to foremen and from foremen to inspectors, and so on—discovered hiding under trucks to endeavour to find men of years of service guilty of some sort of peccadillo, men who by a coincidence are and have been foremost in forwarding the work of their union, one can only come to one conclusion, and I leave you to guess what that is. . . . It is a campaign of 'pinpricks'; if it is done without the knowledge or sanction of the heads of departments, I shall be surprised." Another grievance of the Swansea workers concerned "expenses," as they called it—actually overtime pay. They were supposed to receive 6d. for every hour worked over 12 hours a day. Said one of them: "Supposing I am to work on to three o'clock instead of two. When the hands point to 2.55 and I then knock off, I get no sixpence! Don't you call that a 'pinprick'? We do, and we are not going to have any more of it."

I must confess that I have not much interest in, or sympathy for, railway shareholders; but they have really excellent grounds for complaint against railway directors and managers in this matter. For, apart from the danger to the value of their stock from strikes and possible violence owing to the discontent prevalent among the members of the staff, it is obvious that, in the long run, the men will not give the best that is in them. They sulk and carry on a sort of guerilla warfare with the officials. They are frequently driven to do this because of the personnel of their officers. Men are jobbed into official posts simply because they are the relatives, or the friends of relatives, of men in high positions. And this applies to every grade of official employed by the companies.

I remember one case which caused much trouble at the time. The district superintendent had a coachman who took a sheer delight in spying upon and reporting men employed in the stables and the goods yard. He had no experience whatever outside stable work, but so numerous were his reports that he was made assistant yard inspector so that his particular genius should have free scope, and within one week the place was in a state of chaos. Nowadays the jobbing of men into positions of responsibility is not done so openly and so foolishly as that. The favourites are given some pretence of a training, but the soreness of the men remains.

In addition to this trouble of unfair promotion, there is the creation of official posts—a more serious matter still. The official in a created post must justify his existence and, as a rule, he does this by dragging or attempting to drag more and more out of the men who are engaged in really useful work. The pound-a-week porter is hustled to help earn the salary of an official whose only duty consists in hustling him and his mates. The proposition, then, is this: Whilst long hours and low wages are the root causes of labour unrest, strict discipline embitters men and fills them with desires for retaliatory measures against employers. But, after all, the lesson is really for the employers to learn. They are the people who can remove the causes for the real class hatred which is undoubtedly developing, and they are the people who will ultimately suffer if it is not checked.

ROWLAND KENNEY.

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RANDOM MEDITATIONS ON GENIUS

SOMEBODY in the room was lamenting the present Decline of Genius. . . . I cannot say I listened; such lamentations are not often worth listening to. But the word Genius caught me, worked its way into my inattentive mind; and after a moment I found myself wondering, in a sleepy, but not disagreeable fashion (as one falls to wondering at one's own name or existence), what was meant by Genius; or rather what I meant by it. Looking thus listlessly into my own soul, I discovered a shameful tendency to connect Genius with a certain wave or flame of hair; moreover, with something aquiline, an Apolline glance, decision of movements, and warmth of voice. This image I find in my mind is possibly Goethe's. I am very much afraid it is even more Byron's, and I can't read Byron, except *Don Juan*, and little of that goes a long way. Certainly the image suggested by that word Genius is not Darwin's, and I doubt very much whether Michelangelo's. Yet there is evidently the lion-couchant kind of genius, as well as the eagle-beating-great-wings-in-the-sunrise, or even the lark-at-heaven's-gates. There is the prophet hunched up in melancholy meditation (this is the notion got from Beethoven's grumpy life and the less excellent, I venture to think, of his compositions); but who will send the roof off its rafters, scatter the columns like Samson, and make a hole in the firmament when he gets up, even if he never (for instance, Nietzsche's Super-man) does get up. This atrabilious and inconvenient kind of genius is the one I grieve to find dominant in the opinion of my friend M. Romain Rolland, forgetting his own immortal *Jean Christophe* (and his own self) and repeating gloomy sayings of Beethoven, Michelangelo, and Tolstoi. . . . But let us come to whatever notions that word Genius has accumulated in my own mind, besides these unpardonable visual images of high-nosed and forelocked poets. The enquiry may have some interest, precisely because it is not into any deliberate and rational opinion of mine or yours, but merely into the alluvium of ideas deposited in my mind by unreasoned experience. On the whole, I seem habitually to connect with the word Genius the expectation of harmonious vigour such as meets us most frequently in works of art, although I do not in the least mean to suggest that there is more genius to be met with in artistic circles than in any others—rather the contrary nowadays. I mean that the fact of So-and-so having found out the answer to the Sphinx's riddle, even if generations have failed in doing so, would not answer to my idea of Genius. Nor the fact that What-d'you-call-him had carried through some extraordinary daring enterprise: Hercules is a hero, but not a Genius! On the other hand, the production of something very consummate in beauty does not, somehow, suffice for my notion of Genius. I cannot well see Keats in that light, still less Lamb, whereas I think at once of Coleridge.

Genius, however, meets one oftenest and most undoubtedly in art; there is a certain line and depth in painting, and in music a certain quality of sustaining rhythm, of leaping interval and enveloping harmony, which makes the soul recognise its master: *Ecce dominus deus qui veniens dominabitur mihi.* Yet even as I write these words there sneaks into my mind recollection of the spurious Giorgiones, the doubtful—oh, so doubtful, yet so undoubted!—Leonardos. What of them? And how can something not genius be so uncommonly like it as to cause such misnomers? The readiest answer is that, in so far as they possess such misleading resemblance, some of Giorgione's quality or Leonardo's, those poor Beltraffios or Carianes *are* works of genius; mediocrity being exactly that wherewith disciples and plagiarists have had to eke out their insufficient theft or scanty inheritance of the master's divine fire. The genius, in our thoughts, is always the conqueror and founder of dynasties, or at least the youth whom envious Fate has mowed down lest he should be one. Yet I find myself thinking that conquest may be no sign of genius; it is possible to conquer (and history shows this as the most frequent case) because the adversary is a poltroon; and possible to found a dynasty because the herd are baa-ing for a despot.

And this negative discovery brings one back to the suggestion that (as in that aquiline poet!) Genius really means a recognition on our part of a certain degree of energy (*energy divine*, as Gray sang); it is an expression like *horse-power*, or those mystic numbers of *volts* or *amps* on electric switches. You may like or dislike its presence: there that power is. Wagner, for instance, is less to my taste than Schubert, and even Tintoret than Bonifazio III.; but I cannot deny the superiority in genius any more than the force and swiftness of an express train which blinds and deafens me.

And this leads to the additional observation that, although the greatest works of art, and the mightiest deeds, are always those of a genius, there yet must enter into them (and perhaps into consummate genius also!) something more than horse-power or even staying-power: Wisdom, Beneficence, Wholesomeness, all the manifold rightness which generations of workers have accumulated, and which represents the directions wherein mankind wants creative force to be applied for its greatest pleasure and profit. To assimilate such accumulations of experience and effort is indeed one of the distinctive powers of genius. For your genius, for all his look of innovation, is by no means always innovating, and sometimes—take Raphael, for instance, or Mozart—innovates but very little; it is in reality that regal gesture of his, that radiance or tornado breath, which makes the world think that he has been the first to do the thing. . . . And here I venture on my conviction that Genius is something different from what we call Talent: not a mere degree of it, a mere measure of talent. Nay, sometimes, I would say, existing where there is no talent at all. Surely we have all of us had at least one friend who has never produced anything worth producing, who is a poor painter, sculptor, musician, poet, philosopher, or in the most satisfactory case *is*—or rather *does*—nothing at all, and in whom we yet recognise a genius, *Apolline: incessu patet Deus.* And, on the other hand, there are men who have put genius into their works, and are, apart from those excreted and well-nigh foreign bodies, mediocre: people distinctly without aquiline features, flaming forelocks, stirring

voice, subduing glance, or godlike tread in any sense, literal or figurative; the genius of them going into their works and leaving, by some inexplicable chemistry, no kind of residue in their (however estimable) persons; men whose greatness can express itself only through paint brushes, mathematical equations, military operations, or in composing music or poetry. Oh, such dull people, about whose authenticated creations you feel that they are really the expression of quite different individuals, of those incapable, amateurish or comfortably unproductive creatures whose persons stream with that mysterious conquering radiance which we call Genius. And this comes to saying, I suppose, that when we speak of Genius we merely mean that an action, or a work, or a personality gives us an overwhelming sense of beneficent power.

For this reason the truly wise in their generation are never tempted into lion-hunting, knowing that the human lion at rest is no more majestic than a poodle. Such of us as require the contact, the breath, of Genius seek it in the works of some folk and in the person of others. VERNON LEE.

Correspondence

MR. HILAIRE BELLOC AND THE ETHICS OF OWNERSHIP

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN.

SIR,—Your correspondent, Mr. Hawkes, asks me to define what is, in my view, the "fundamental object or motive of property." He further postulates that property (in the means of production, I presume) is "at present generally designed for the purpose of extracting two days' service for one," which I take to be only another way of saying that property is used for the exploitation of men. As to the object of property, I answer that the object of the institution of property in society is the securing of economic freedom for the units of which a healthy State should be built up—principally families, but also, of course, corporations great and small, and in some measure individuals. Freedom consists in the powers, negatively, to re-act upon the State, and positively to form a conscious and effective part of the State; if we are free we not only receive temporal authority, but also originate it. The political factors of freedom (which may be defined as the right not only to vote upon an issue, but to initiate it), however securely guaranteed, are maimed unless they are accepted by a corresponding economic factor of freedom.

So much for the *object* of property, or the end in regard to which men have set up this institution and preserved it.

The *motive* of property is a term I do not exactly understand. One may have a motive in the *use* one makes of property, but property in itself can have no motive. I take it your correspondent uses the term elliptically for "motive in the use of property," since he goes on to say that the motive behind the use made of property to-day is the exploitation of men. Upon this point also I think I can state my view clearly.

In any particular contract for production where the property in the means of production is vested in other hands than those of the human agent of production, some portion of the total produce will legitimately remain due to the owner of the means of production and, therefore, only a part of the total product can be morally claimed by the non-possessing human agent. One must either admit that or else deny the morality of property in the means of production. If one asserts, as I do, the fundamental morality of property and the necessity for that institution in a healthy State (I mean private property in the means of production), then it follows that there must always be a division in the total product between the two parties to the contract, the non-working owner, and the working non-owner, where these are separate. The conception that any such division constitutes "exploitation" by the owner over the non-owner is a conception directly deduced from the moral dogma that the private ownership in the means of production is immoral. If you affirm the dogma that such private ownership is moral, then the consequent division of the total product, a necessary consequence, is also moral, and no man who thinks property a right will call that division "exploitation."

If we mean by "exploitation" the taking by the owner of more than his due share, then we must establish some criterion by which to judge that word "due." I am of the opinion (and I give it only because your correspondent asks for my opinion) that there is in this matter, as in every other economic matter, a moral criterion, and that this is established by the standard of effective desire of accumulation upon the one hand, and by the standard of subsistence in the particular society concerned upon the other.

Capital will accumulate in any society whatsoever (no matter how property may be arranged) with a view to future or deferred enjoyment. That motive force is just as true of a despot holding all the capital of the community collectively in his hands, as it is of politicians holding it in trust for the community, or as it is of individuals concerned only with their own future. This standard of effective desire of accumulation—the minimum of future reward for which capital will accumulate—lays down an inferior limit below which you will not get capital to co-operate towards the formation of the total product.

Similarly, in every society there is an existing standard of human subsistence which we all know as a matter of commonsense, but which will never be capable of exact and unchanging definition. We know what we regard as necessary for decency in the way of house room, for health in the way of food, in our climate, and the curiously complicated clothing which our society demands by custom. That standard of subsistence lays down an inferior limit and marks the terms below which the human agent, even though dispossessed of any property, will not, if he is free, consent, or (in practice), if he is unfree, be compelled, to the creation of the total product.

In a society where property was well divided, the human agent, even where not an owner of the capital used upon the form of production in which he was engaged, would normally be an owner of such property in some other means of production and would receive revenue therefrom. Where property is grossly ill-distributed, as in England to-day, and where non-owners form a separate class, the owners cannot push wages in settled trades down below the subsistence level of the moment; but they can and do create by competition a vast scrap-heap of humanity in which the subsistence level is never reached; they can and do give the great majority of the non-owners occasional experience of being below the subsistence standard—thereby poisoning their whole lives—and they can and do gradually lower that which society will tolerate as a minimum.

These are but a part of the evils proceeding from the abominations of highly restricted property in a State nominally free. It should surely be self-evident that the remedy for evils proceeding from the restriction of property to the hands of a few must either be the vesting of property in the hands of all collectively, or in the hands of very many severally.

Of the first I believe that it is not realisable in human society, contradictory to the nature of man, and productive to him in any attempt at its realisation of pain and misfortune.

Of the second I believe that it is the normal, stable, and human solution of our difficulties.—Yours, etc.,

King's Land, Horsham. H. BELLOC.
September 11th.

SOCIAL LEGISLATION AND THE USURY OBSESSION

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN.

SIR,—While we Social Reformers may strenuously differ on some points, it is well that we should heartily agree where we can do so. I heartily agree with Mr. Money when he says that "good housing is only to be obtained by collective effort calling to its aid all the powers of the State."

My letter proposed that when a man has obtained his living wage from his employer by the power of the State, he should demand his house. Where private effort, and we cannot dispense with this just yet, failed to provide for his need, he should appeal to the local authority, and, finally, "Where the local authority were slow to supply a proved demand, a strong Central Board could step in to provide it at their expense."

My procedure, insisting on the sufficient wage first, insists that the money to pay for the labourer's house shall come from his master in return for his labour, and houses shall not rain down anyhow; but as labourers desire them, and set apart enough of their income to pay a fair rent for them, they shall be built They are not to be built directly by the employer, and so keep the labourer under his will, nor directly by the State as a great un-

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known Providence. But they will be built to meet a reasonable demand, and the State will be in the background with power to see that all reasonable demands shall be provided for.

We all know that good wages alone cannot provide good homes—or all miners would have them. We know in Norfolk that our County Police with 26s. a week coming in regularly cannot always obtain a good cottage, because either the landlord refuses to provide the land, or the capitalist builder is not satisfied with a small though constant return for his capital. Both these difficulties can be overcome by the District and County Councils. But they are very slow to move, and for this reason a strong Central Board ready, as well as able, to act far more strongly than Mr. John Burns and his Local Government Board have ever done is a clear necessity. The only point where I differ in this with Mr. Money is that I feel it is more in agreement with our English system of free local government that I ask for this form of compulsion, when other means have been tried and failed. Having thus shown how willing I am to agree with Mr. Money where I feel he is right, may I now point out one or two defects in his other proposals?

We should not, as he suggests, "subscribe to build houses as we subscribe to build warships," because the two buildings have nothing in common. A warship is a costly savage weapon, with a life of about ten years. We must pay for these as we ask for them, and not put the cost on our children. A house is a civilising instrument which may easily last two lifetimes, and therefore the cost may fairly be spread over that time. And when we ask for warships nationally, they can all be planned after one pattern by a small committee sitting in London. But we ask for our homes individually, and local tastes differ widely. A London pattern, such as Mr. John Burns sends down to Norfolk, does not suit Norfolk tastes. It merely bears the L.G.B. brand of being made to meet the demand of men who have not a living wage and therefore must take thankfully what the Board of Guardians or District Council doles out to them. This emphasises their dependence instead of building up their independence.

Here Mr. Money suggests that men earning only 20s. a week ought not to pay rates and taxes, and asserts this as a "principle long ago laid down by Liberal economists." Professor Marshall, in his *Principles of Political Economy* (1907 Edition, p. 804), says: "No one should be exempted (from paying rates) altogether, for so long as a person retains the right of voting on the levying and expenditure of rates, it is not safe that he should wholly escape their pressure." We can all agree with Professor Marshall when he suggests that the value of the payments may be returned to him in educational or other benefits, as we do now, but the right to vote and the duty to pay are closely connected in our English minds.

Mr. Money, like many others, points to Ireland, and her cheap cottages, let to Irish labourers by Irish farmers (on the Local Boards) who profit from their cheap labour at the expense of the other sources of Irish finance. If these Irish farmers had been compelled to pay a living wage first to these labourers, they could not have paid such high prices for their farms. This is why the Conservative and landlord party are very eager for a housing measure on Irish lines.

A keen observer, "Home Counties," has been telling us (in the *World's Work* for September) what he noticed there during a recent visit. He saw many public-houses, some dirt, and "a kind of fatalistic slackness," due probably to generations of serfdom. If we would bring temperance, neatness, and thrift into our labourers' homes, we must insure them that if they are temperate, clean, and thrifty, they shall have good homes which they can with security call their own.—Yours, etc.

HERBERT A. DAY.

Norwich, September 15.

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN.

SIR,—May I explain one or two points upon which Mr. Chiozza Money appears to have misunderstood me? I had not forgotten the excellent cottages put up under the Irish Labourers' Acts; nor should I expect the fact of their existence to result immediately in any reduction of the customary wages; but wages will not rise so easily to meet an increasing cost of living when house rent is kept artificially low. The fact that the uneconomic figure of 1s. 6d. has become a quite usual rent in English villages is, I think, one reason why the rural labourers' wages have remained as low as they are. I am also told in Ireland that it is a very common occurrence for new Council cottages to be let at the artificial rate to friends of the councillors who may be quite in a position to pay a full economic rent. This would not be considered a wanton charge to make in a country where the purity of official administration is considered a very small thing as compared with one's duty to one's friends. I doubt if it would be very seriously denied. If it is true, we see an obvious case of waste; just as we see it again in the enormous cost of Irish old age pensions. If we wish to take an illustration of economy from Ireland, it would be better to look at the enormous advance in prosperity produced by the work of Sir Horace Plunkett and others, not by doles, but by lessons in self-help. I cannot compare the better housing of a few poor labourers and of some not so very poor with the real and increasing national advance which had resulted from the use of the Co-operative Societies—not to mention the 200 Credit Societies which provide by tainted usury the means of active prosperity for a whole people.

From the same standpoint, which Mr. Chiozza Money would call, I fear, very individualistic, why should the State be so eager to pay what the labourer ought to be able to win for himself, his full economic rent? Granted that things are out of gear owing partly to the agricultural depression and the efficiency of the bricklayers' trade unions, it is the business of the State to endeavour to help to an adjustment. But to take money largely from the townsman and devote it wastefully to relieving farmer and landlord of their responsibilities is, I think, more than we in the country desire or deserve. We want the State to organise information for us; we want the help of State credit for a purpose which has a national as well as a local aspect; we may require a little financial help; if so, let it be as little as possible. We have to owe something to our legislators, but Mr. Chiozza Money offers us eternal indebtedness under the guise of a gift. The cure is worse than the illness.

I do not know why Mr. Chiozza Money repeats his analogy of the Post Office. The price of postal facilities steadily decreases, while the profit to the State upon all the work of the Post Office runs into several millions. We should hardly arrive at that excellent result by building cottages to be let at a shilling a week. One last point: when I spoke of "bread and circuses" I meant to make a somewhat hackneyed allusion to the policy of the Roman Republic at the beginning of its decline. The Roman circus was on the whole degrading; our public music means to be, and is in my humble opinion, an educative influence, and thereby even—if I may employ the objectionable term—a good investment.—Yours, etc.,

ANDREW STUART

Stoke, Grantham,
September 16th.

OFFICIAL RAILWAY ENQUIRIES AND COMPULSION

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN.

SIR,—Is it permissible to enquire, in reference to the article on "Railways, Accidents, and the State," in last week's NEW STATESMAN, whether there is to be no end to compulsion in all branches of life—public or private—of business or of pleasure? Where the voluntary system of arranging individually our lives to the best advantage from the community's point of view is a glaring, pressing, degrading failure, by all means let us coerce the minority when that minority is a quite small one, and is doing proved and desperate harm (by its nonconformity) to the majority. But do not let us lose sight of how bad a thing in itself is compulsion. I suppose we all look forward to the ideal of a non-coerced community of good-by-nature citizens. The Tolstoyan believes this could be inaugurated now by abolishing—what St. Paul said *caused* sin—viz., the Law. But is this to be attained by more and more legal coercion in daily life? Even at present, so hedged and bounded in by largely unknown laws are we that even the legal specialist of one department of legality fails of complete knowledge of that which each citizen is supposed to know in all its departments. To express it in the vulgar tongue, is this not a "bit thick" on the ordinary citizen?

A codification of our laws, and a simplification of them, might do something. But, as every reader of law cases knows, this in itself would raise fresh interpretations in law and in language, and fresh complications in the process. Nevertheless, codification and simplification were well worth attempting. Every contentious Bill becomes in Act a much more complicated thing than it need be, by reason of various compromises during its passage through Parliament. These, for instance, could be "ironed out" after a few years had "dried out" the contending passions of the matter, without mangling the whole statute.

To descend from these high generalities to the particular point at issue, surely Board of Trade enquiries, even without the much-bepraised compulsory powers, are not necessarily farcical, since

undoubtedly they have led to many improvements in our railway system. The publicity, and the onus upon a railway company at a future enquiry, if the recommendations have not been carried out, is a large safeguard. And the writer of the article seems to overlook the fact that to "earn dividends" a company must assuredly avoid accidents all it can. Immediately after a disaster, in the often heated atmosphere of opposing arguments, is surely not the best time for further compulsory regulations, which often do, and always may, overlook even more important considerations against them.

To sum up: (1) Do we really need compulsion, yet at any rate, in this matter of Official Railway Inquiries? (2) While still perhaps needing some further compulsions of the naughty minority by the righteous majority, let them be as few as possible; and can we not do something to remove and alleviate old compulsions, especially where they are obsolete and worn out?—Yours, etc.,

HERBERT B. MATTHEWS.

CHILDREN IN THE WORKHOUSE

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN.

SIR,—With reference to your article on the proposed new workhouse order, which does not require the provision of a properly equipped nursery, or the appointment of any paid attendant on the children still to be retained in the workhouse, or any arrangement for their training, I should like to describe a recent experience.

I have just been in one of the dozen most important English towns, and incidentally I went over its great workhouse, a gigantic concern of which the Poor Law Guardians are immensely proud. I found there about a score of small children, ranging from a few months to about four years old. These, it will be remembered, are representative of several thousands in England and Wales whom the new order fails even to suggest should be removed from the workhouse. These little ones were, to my mind, being simply ruined for life, in a large, airy, clean room, where they had absolutely nothing to do, their hands being utterly unoccupied from dawn to bed time. I was informed that the nursery was often twice as full, and that a couple of rocking chairs in an asphalt court outside provided sufficient amusement! The children stood or sat listlessly about, there being in the room not a single thing for them to handle. To anyone who knows anything of children, this means that they are being manufactured into mental deficients, for only through the sense of touch do the little ones develop their brains. I fear that the children that I saw are destined to grow up into "unemployables." When I remonstrated with the nurse in charge (her only staff consisted of two doltish old women who were inmates of the workhouse), she said that all their little toys from last Christmas (!) were broken, so she had put them away. As if it mattered whether toys were broken! The fact was that she dreaded "untidiness," and probably also disliked the trouble of perpetually cleaning up. When I said that the children would forget how to use their hands, she replied, "Oh, you need not fear that. You should see them use their fists on one another at times!" You can imagine what the nation is making out of the several thousands of children whom Mr. Burns intends to keep in the workhouses—even in the best cases, when the Union is generous enough (as five-sixths of them are not) to pay for one attendant for the little ones, and to provide a clean and airy room.

In the children's sick ward things were no better. Quite big children were sitting up in their cots, all clean and neat, but without a thing to do, or to finger, or to look at. Of course, it is for fear something should fall off the bed to the floor, and need to be picked up! In spite of the cleanliness and ventilation, the ward seemed to me, in its callous neglect of these young minds, the abomination of desolation. Here also the nurse in charge had nothing in the way of staff but stupid old pauper women, who were thought good enough to wash the children, etc. I can well believe that these workhouse inmates, who acted as nurses, needed as much looking after as the children. One really beautiful girl of about ten, with a charming expression, was told to sing to us. She did so quite wonderfully, without a note to guide her, singing four or five verses of a child's song. It seemed to me that she clearly understood the sense of what she was singing, and the meaning of the story told in the song. The nurse turned to us, and said, *before the child*, "She's an imbecile." I asked her how it had been decided that she was imbecile, and I learnt that this conclusion had been come to because the child walked with difficulty, dragging its legs, and was dirty. "She's been like it since birth." To me it seemed a case of partial paralysis below the waist. Nothing was given me in the way of evidence of mental deficiency. The poor thing had just been left to sit up in bed, week in and week out, staring into the room, utterly unoccupied and bored. It is hard to say how much any of her mental backwardness, at the age of ten, if such there be, is not due rather to this unnatural way of living than to an abnormally unconvoluted brain. Anyhow, it was one of the saddest sights I ever saw. I could not help reflecting that the new Mental Deficiency Act carefully prevents any encroachment on the powers of the Poor Law Guardians, who are to be allowed to continue to retain these poor creatures in the workhouses, and that the new draft order requires nothing in the way of mental training for them.

When one thinks of all the other huge buildings in our large towns, where, besides food and sleep and warmth, air and cleanliness are apparently supposed to be all that a young human requires, and where the authorities strut around, *proud* of their workhouse and all the mischief it is creating, it is difficult not to have a thought stray in the direction of dynamite!—Yours, etc.,

RUTH C. BENTINCK.

Morton's House, Corfe Castle,
September 16th, 1913.

THE UNMARRIED MOTHER AND HER CHILD

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN.

SIR,—There are many directions in which an awakened public conscience is working wisely and hopefully for the treatment of problems which we are all deeply concerned should be successfully solved. The care of children as future citizens is one of these problems; and the care of the first offender is another. For the latter we have fully realised the importance of rational treatment. The nation has decreed that the first offender shall not be indelibly branded as a criminal, but that everything possible shall be done to secure him a fresh start. Our magistrates vouch for the success of this treatment in preventing him from becoming permanently demoralised. But there is one offender who is often less wisely dealt with. The treatment of the unmarried girl-mother with her fatherless child contrasts too vividly with that of other first offenders, and if she is a domestic servant hopeless indeed is her future.

Among the sad crowd of forlorn women in our London workhouse wards who are there to give birth to children deserted by their fathers, about half are domestic servants; all the other industries together do not provide as many as this one. Is not this a terrible commentary on the popular impression of the safety of domestic service for young girls? To such a woman no hope remains. The worker in any other trade has an opportunity of again supporting herself and of cherishing her child. To the domestic servant a fresh start is denied, except at the monstrous price of separation from her baby. Our rescue homes are full of such childless mothers; our orphanages of such motherless children. So difficult is it for such a woman to win back a character without giving up the personal care and love she owes her child, that the only alternative to many is prostitution.

Eighteen months ago a few experienced social workers started a little hostel in Chelsea where young unmarried mothers, who have been domestic servants of otherwise unblemished character, can live safely and support themselves as day-servants, whilst caring for their own children. The hostel is open to servants from all parts of the country, and is under the care of a small committee, and a matron whose personal influence is invaluable. The scheme (the only one in England which aims at keeping mother and child permanently together) is succeeding beyond expectation, and will become self-supporting. Meantime help is sorely needed to tide over the initial expense of such an undertaking. We are sure some of your readers will help in saving these girls from an awful alternative.

Full particulars can be obtained from, and subscriptions received by, the hon. assistant treasurer, MRS. A. G. WHITTING, 22 Tedworth Square, S.W., and the hon. secretary, MISS KINGSFORD, 5 Doneraile Street, Fulham.

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CONSTANCE SMITH.

XUM

Miscellany

MR. MARCHANT'S LUCK

"THERE you are! Eat it while it's hot, there's a good man, and let me get it cleared orf. Bert'll be comin' round presently, I expect, to see Julia."

"Well, if he don't come to see her, I don't know who it is. I don't invite him, that's a sure thing."

"'E ain't a bad chap really. It's a pity you've set your face against him."

"*I* 'aven't set my face against him! It's work that 'as. He and work don't agree, that's where it is."

"'E might alter that."

"And 'e mightn't. You've 'ad a taste of how it is having nothing but her few pence comin' in. You 'aven't enjoyed these last twelve weeks. 'Ow about Julia?"

His wife shifted her ground.

"Everyone's got to please theirselves in this world."

"Please theirselves! I should say so. I've been pleasing meself tramping round every day all these hours to get what I can't 'ave. That's becorse my father never troubled 'imself to look ahead. If he'd thought of me as a electrician instead of a errant-boy——"

"There, let bygones be bygones."

"They've got to be! D'you think if I could 'ave my time over agen I'd bring us to this?"

He drank his tea and kept silence for a few moments, watching his wife's pale face. Then something struck him.

"Been cleanin' agen?"

"Yes, I got a bit this morning."

"You don't look fit for it."

Mrs. Marchant smiled.

"It ain't no good considerin' that. I'm all right. Now what's the matter? Ain't you going to finish your tea?"

"Not until you answers me truthful. 'Ave you had any dinner or tea to-day or 'ave you not?"

"I've 'ad a bit. Of course I 'ave."

He pushed his plate aside.

"Bread and drippin'. That's good diet to scrub other people's places on!"

He dropped the piece of meat from his plate back into the frying-pan and held it over the fire. It spluttered and sent up a savoury odour. He averted his gaze.

"Come on, my girl. You're goin' to eat this meat or it's goin' to get left—for Bert, I suppose."

Mrs. Marchant came and sat at the table.

"'Alf and 'alf," she said, cutting it, and the compromise was agreed upon.

Presently Marchant broke the silence again, as was his wont.

"'Ow'd you like to emigrate?" he inquired.

"What, and leave Mary and her little ones and Jim and Vi'let and never see any of 'em again? Like it! Yes, I'd like it, fast enough."

"It's better than the workus."

Slow tears rolled down Mrs. Marchant's thin cheeks.

"I shouldn't care if I could see the end of it," she remarked. "Only I don't see what *is* to 'appen. Twelve weeks ain't a day."

"And I ain't twenty-five."

"Seems hard when you've kep' at it all these years. It ain't as if you'd been one of them to 'old up the public-houses. Nor been shy of work neither."

Marchant's apathetic eyes had fallen on vacant spots in the room where familiar things had always stood until lately, when they had been removed one by one and carried out after dusk under his wife's arm. A dull flush came into his sallow cheek. Julia would be in soon and then Bert would call for her. He hated Bert knowing. It seemed undignified somehow not to be able to bring anything in at his time of life. Why should they be made to look so small?

Someone came to the door and his wife went to it. It was the caretaker of the warehouses opposite. They discussed what cleaning she should do next week—there was no more to be done now.

The brilliant sunshine in the summer streets, the gay crowds on the pavements, the shops full of costly produce came before Marchant's eyes, just as he had seen them that morning. A feeling of bitter resentment filled him and the sensation of sinking weakness he had felt then came back.

Mrs. Marchant returned from the door and reached for her hat.

"Caretaker's goin' away," she said, "and wants me to slip over and see what I can get on with next week."

"Next week!" echoed her husband with satire. "Why don't she say next year? We might be all dead and buried by then!"

Alone in the room, he stood irresolutely by the darkening window. It was quite a new thought that had come to him. A disagreeable and startling one certainly, but a necessity, or so it persisted in presenting itself. What else was there to be done? They knew no one who had anything to lend—if they would—and there was nothing left to put away. . . . His wife would be back in a few minutes and Julia. . . . He crossed the room and hunted in an old wooden box for a tool he wanted, found it, and climbed on to a chair. He was clumsy for a moment; then, finding the right spot, forced the meter open. Pennies—a good many dropped in by Bert and Julia—lay there thickly. He transferred them to his pocket.

Then he tidied up the meter and got down and took away the chair.

The pennies were in a neat heap on the table when Julia and his wife came in together.

"'Ullo, Dad! Touched the spot this time. What've you been doin'? Holding 'orses' 'eads?"

"Never you mind." Mr. Marchant kept his back to her. "'Orses' 'eads or no 'orses' 'eads, that's for a hot supper, and that's the only part of it of any consequence". . . .

They had made the smoking dish which the gratified housewife placed before them look distinctly foolish when a knock came at the door.

"Bert," said Mr. Marchant, laying his knife and fork down on his empty plate.

"Not his knock."

"Someone to give you a bit more cleanin', my dear."

Julia opened it.

"Oh, it's someone for you, Dad."

Mr. Marchant got up importantly.

"Evening, Marchant. Been sent to you by your old manager. We're full up as we can be, and want someone to start right away to-morrow afternoon. Can you take it on?"

Marchant went a sickly yellow-white.

"Yes, I can take it on. Thank you, sir," he said. . . .

Bert, having nothing particular to do just then, dropped in the next morning to discuss the good news with his prospective mother-in-law. He told her that some people have all the luck, that permanent jobs never made a habit of coming his way, and that he'd never been offered anything worth having without so much as lifting his little finger for it, as it were. Not but what he'd be the right man in the right place. This he assured the happy wife half a dozen times.

The recipient of so much good fortune heard scraps of this conversation as he washed and brushed his worn clothes, fidgeting in and out of the kitchen meanwhile as if he also wished to talk. He went so far once as to open his mouth and say "'Ow often——" and then closed it quickly again, and withdrew to continue his toilet.

The rent man came presently and received a very serious promise, and the blue paper he had tucked away in the leaves of his book was not filled in, and he went away again. Later the representative of the gas company came and was given access and prepared to collect his due.

"This meter's been broken open," he announced, and the feeling of sinking weakness returned with horrible force to the man tidying himself within.

Bert walked to the open doorway.

"I sye, 'ere's a go!" he said. "Who can 'ave got at——" He caught sight of the face looking in the small mirror.

There was a pause, blank and empty. Then Bert spoke.

"Look 'ere," he said in a hurried whisper, "you keep yourself quiet and don't come out. I'm goin' to take on this show."

ALICE JAMES.

AN EPISODE

SWEET Sombre-eyes the girl I styled;
I saw her pass in park and street
Looking as if she never smiled,
And yet her eyes were sweet.

Chance joined us, each an idle guest;
I, my strange fancy to pursue,
Watched her, and then a gentle jest,
Light as a bubble, blew.

Her eyes flashed, as the stars that float
From rockets leap to a pure blaze;
She laughed the lively quivering note
Of girls in their young days.

I was like one that unaware
Knocks a bright vase, a metal thing,
Hears beauty, so long silent there,
Sing.

REGINALD INGRAM.

AN OBITUARY NOTICE

On the 15th inst., at the James Lane Houghton Almshouse, Anne Elizabeth Starkie, only child of the late Robert Starkie, solicitor, of Ribbleford, aged sixty-one.

AT sixteen, Anne Starkie, in frilled white muslin, looking forth upon a sunlit world, supposed that it must be always summer. She saw roses everywhere, and plucked the few that she wanted so carefully that their thorns never pricked her. Since her father had an excellent income and employed three servants besides the gardener, Anne's governess, the uncertificated daughter of a clergyman with nine children and no thought for the morrow, considered it unnecessary to explain that life was full of care, sorrow, responsibility, and many things grievous and unmentionable. She taught Anne, who was a docile and intelligent pupil, several kinds of elaborate needlework, a little botany, less French, and the use of the globes. Occasionally they carried soup or jelly to sick poor persons living in clean cottages, and once a week they attended a sewing-party, and helped to make woollen garments for the heathen. Anne grew up sweet-tempered, affectionate, and unambitious. She desired nothing better than to keep house for her father, who honestly believed that women were designed by Providence to minister to the comfort of their male relatives. He gave Anne no money, but he liked to buy pretty clothes for her, and to bring her little presents of trinkets and expensive confectionery. Books he never bought for her, because it irritated him to see a woman reading; and Anne, who preferred to sew, never missed them. Her tastes were conveniently domestic, and her seed-cakes were celebrated. She was fond of music, and played the piano with agreeable accuracy and some charm. On this account, and also because she was of a pliant disposition and possessed no opinions definite enough to cause annoyance to anyone, she was popular in the tiny society of Ribbleford, and received innumerable invitations to tea-parties, which it never occurred to her to refuse. Cheerfully contented with her lot, she was none the less able to find room for placid dreams of a far-off future when she should marry and extend her sphere of activity from the kitchen to the nursery. Anne was extremely fond of children, and meant to have at least half a dozen of her own. She supposed that she should some day become engaged, with her father's glad approval, to an entirely suitable young man with about six hundred a year. He would smoke a little, perhaps; but he would be a total abstainer and a member of the Church of England. Nothing unpleasant or unkind would ever mar the supreme felicity of their union. Anne's dreams made no allowances for destiny. . . .

Tranquil, monotonous, and uneventful, the years passed. Anne, who had never known hunger or pain or weariness of spirit, was thirty years old when the overturning of a pony-carriage made her, in five minutes of a June afternoon, a cripple for all the remaining days of her life. People, pitying her, said that things might have been worse, since at any rate Robert Starkie could provide comfortably for his unfortunate daughter, who could never now expect to marry. Anne, her sweet temper unimpaired by ill-health, continued to smile

cheerfully upon a world which still appeared to her to be designed upon the best possible system. She loved to lie in the sunlight and listen to the birds. Her contentment was as effortless as the serene shining of stars. It was incredible to her that the cold clutch of misery should ever lay hold upon her in a world where there was such wealth of loving-kindness. She smiled bravely even when they told her, half afraid lest she should fail to understand, that her father, dying by his own hand, had left her to face poverty for the first time, and to face it alone. She was a little bewildered by the discovery, but in no wise resentful. It would now be necessary, she supposed, to find some work to do, since, even with care and the most meticulous economy, she could hardly live upon sixteen pounds a year. It did not occur to her that she was entirely unfitted to earn her own living. Someone, she felt confident, must be willing to provide employment of a ladylike description for a middle-aged cripple with unimpeachable references. And later, of course, she might become an inmate of the James Lane Houghton asylum for indigent gentlewomen. But it was necessary to have lived at least fifty years in order to obtain admission to this harbour of refuge, and Anne Starkie had lived no more than forty-five. For five years, accordingly, she must do battle with circumstance. Neither hope nor courage failed her. She stitched unceasingly, with tireless patience, tiny garments for other women's babies. She put much love and many tender thoughts into her labour, which was untainted by self-pity or vain regrets. All day she sewed, never stopping to consider if her own arms felt intolerably empty. She never envied those other women, the mothers of her dream-children; but sometimes she wished that she might see one of these little ones clad in the exquisite work of her hands.

There were weeks when Anne earned as much as fifteen shillings. There were other weeks when she dined daily on bread and margarine, and wondered gently if she should really live to be fifty years old. She never sewed on Sundays, and she looked forward to each succeeding Sunday of deliberate leisure with sincere delight; it was so pleasant merely to sit with her hands folded idly in her lap, and her thoughts busy among the days that used to be and the days that were to come. Her eyesight was beginning to fail, but that, after all, did not matter much, since the tale of the lean years was nearly accomplished. . . .

In the little square room over the gateway of the almshouse Anne Starkie watched through muslin-curtained lattice-windows the gathering twilight of her life. Darkness fell upon her tired eyes as gratefully as a summer's moonless night upon dusty day. Waiting there for death, a barren woman, blind now and halt, she felt the joy of life stir like an unborn babe within her soul. She had never walked in paradise, never looked down into the abysses of hell; she had wrought no mighty work and beheld no shining vision. She had not even borne a child. Therefore when she died, rather painfully, from pleurisy, people said: "Poor thing, what a release!" not knowing that she had never learnt to be sorry for herself. Anne Starkie, could she have heard them, would have smiled cheerfully.

ANGELA GORDON.

Art and Drama

ART AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC

DEMOS is stirring in his æsthetic sleep. We know this by evidence on all hands. Around us on poster, magazine and book-cover, and a dozen other places, are to be seen the first hurried efforts of the artist to supply his incoherent demand. Seeing them, we may perhaps feel restive or even hopeless, but that were but a short-sighted view of the really tremendously hopeful state of affairs. For we are, after all, so much better off than were, say, the good folk of 1860 who, in spite of their "Golden Age of English Illustration," had no art at all that was a genuine supplying of public demand.

In these days of sixpenny calendars, embellished in however tasteless a way with photogravures after Botticelli and Turner, it is not by any means futile to glance back sometimes and see Ruskin fighting for Turner's very existence as a serious painter, and at the same time himself discovering the existence of the best part of the Italian masters, who were quite unknown even to the artists of those days. Now they are known, of course, to a very large proportion of the population, and their pictures placed within the possible reach of all. It is well to take this survey, if for no other reason, to remember the man who was largely instrumental in awakening the popular desire for beauty, and in putting it for ever above the puritanical idea of it as an invention of the evil one; for Ruskin's work did not end with his own stupendous achievement: he kindled the flame that lighted Morris and his circle, Burne-Jones, Rossetti, and all the principal workers of last century in this field. It is easy to belittle their work, but wiser to wonder at the true and strong sense of beauty that alone could have produced anything at all of freshness or vitality in that England that already seems so far away. Morris did much, but he could not bring art to the people as he wished, simply because they were not ready to receive it. It has come to them now, at the right time, in ways far other than those Morris either expected or approved—through the machinery he hated, the cheapness he hated, and the whole modern point of view that was anathema to him. It is inconceivable, however, that popular taste will long remain content with cheap reproduction of indifferent, if flashy, illustration. Already in Germany there is a school of lithography far on the way to a position as right and assured of the popular eye as the famous print-makers of Japan. The easel-picture is all very well in its way, but every year there are fewer people who want to saddle themselves with such cumbersome furniture. We no longer, most of us, live in ancestral mansions, and art must adapt itself to the Town Flat and the Country Cottage before it can expect to recapture the confidence it desires and should have.

There is another reason for the recent widespread interest in the print and analogous decoration—namely, the revolt against those drab and dingy interiors where the easel-picture still looks comfortable in its absurd gilded frame. However tiny the flat or cottage, it is ten to one nowadays that the paint will be white and the walls cream or grey. The Whistler influence, or rather the oriental influence *via* Whistler, has already penetrated all but the lower strata (artistically gauged) of our civilisation, and this influence in favour of light surroundings demands gaiety of colour and simplicity of statement in its decorations.

Space forbids the discussion of so large a subject here, but there are fundamental artistic reasons why so complex a thing as an even moderately sized picture cannot legiti-

mately be either very gay or very simple in its statement. Neither can it be very cheap.

It is easy to see, then, that with a popular demand that will grow every year more insistent and more definite, there must inevitably spring up, both here and in America, a much more active school of print-makers that will be free from the artistic snobbery that refuses to sell anything under a guinea or at a shop.

No doubt the success of the Germans, referred to above, is partly due to the fact that some of the best of the prints can be bought for half-a-crown. For the average home these are much preferable to the majority of pictures in any metropolitan exhibition priced from twenty to two thousand guineas, even when these are good of their kind.

It may be interesting to point out one or two ways in which our friend Demos will probably prove himself more intelligent than the Affluent Collector, who in the ardour of accumulation is apt to turn his house into something painfully reminiscent of a third-rate provincial museum. He will no doubt take a lesson from the Japanese, for instance, who devotes a small recess in his living-room unreservedly to beauty. Here he hangs his picture—usually a strip of silk mounted on rollers—choosing it with care from his collection, which, even if large, can easily be stored in a small cupboard when rolled up in this portable fashion. Here, too, he arranges his flowers according to the season, with that extraordinary care and artistry that have made him famous everywhere; and you may be sure that the picture and flowers are chosen with deliberation in order not only to harmonise but actively and intelligently to help each other. He may also hang a long print on the pillar near by, but the rest of the room will be simple matting or paper, out of which the Beauty Corner will shine with the effect of a jewel. This arrangement is really the only possible one where pictures are to be intelligently enjoyed; for when they are always on view one becomes accustomed to them, and after a few weeks ceases to be aware of their existence. If, however, the picture be put away for a time, our own growth brings fresh understanding to its reappearance, and if it expresses any true idea it will come out with ever-recurring delight, always with new beauties unfolding to our educated vision. The chief difficulties that seem in the way of this arrangement in our country are lack of space, wear, and dirt. If the prints are framed and glazed they take up a good deal of room in storing. If they are pinned up they soon wear out, for we have, alas, as yet no cheap paper that is also good enough to stand repeated pinning; and, moreover, in most of our filthy towns the beauty of it would in any case be ruined by soot and noxious gases in a week or two.

This state of things can, however, be remedied, and in several ways. First, any frame-maker will make a frame with movable back, so that the prints, kept in a portfolio, can be changed quite easily at frequent intervals. This is an admirable plan where such pictures as German autolithographs (published in England by Asher & Co., Bedford Street, W.) are within the means of the collector, for they are produced in a range of uniform sizes according to price.

A simple *Passe-partout* mounting will obviate the clumsiness and expense of framing to some extent, but there is certainly an opening for a washable frameless print that will not be ugly in surface. This will doubtless be forthcoming as soon as the demand is big enough.

Meanwhile these few remarks may inform some aspiring reader that a collection of pictures of some kind is a present possibly for everyone, and not till one has started it can he realise the delights of acquiring new specimens and, after a period of months, seeing how the old ones wear—in all senses.

And it is to be remembered that these prints as a rule have all the artistic value of etchings, they are in every sense as much originals. It is possible now to make a collection of the best modern art at prices ranging from one shilling upwards. I have no pecuniary interest in German lithographs, but I am quite sure that many of the prints produced at this time will rise enormously in value in the future. That, to the ordinary man in his present half-awakened state of consciousness, is unfortunately the most winning thing one can say about such things.

MAXWELL ARMFIELD.

THE REAL THING

I SPENT an entertaining evening at the Garrick Theatre last week. One dramatic critic, deceived by the title of the original play, *Le Prise de Berg-op-Zoom*, anticipated that *The Real Thing* would have a decidedly Dutch flavour. Everybody knows now that its flavour is Parisian. The change in the title represents pretty accurately the change which the play has undergone in adaptation. The adapter and producer have felt that the seriousness of the devotion of Mme. Vannaire's adroit and airy lover must be emphasised, and the cynicism of the original mitigated, if the play was to please in this country. They have, therefore, introduced into a comedy composed out of the salt, sparkling froth of levity a certain emotional solidity. The second act, beautifully and humanly played by Mr. Aynesworth and Miss Phyllis Neilson-Terry, appears in consequence fascinatingly or damnably subversive of conjugal morality, according to the spectators' sympathies. The manner in which the risky is circumvented in the dialogue can be shown by one example. M. Vannaire, having made up his mind to divorce his wife, asks Lulu how much it will cost "to marry her," to which she replies, with hardly credible moderation, that she must have a flat and 600 francs a month. It is clear what is meant, and if it was with an eye to the Censorship that the word marry was substituted, the device is typical of the nature and futility of the control exercised by that amazing and bogus guardian of our morals. As a matter of fact, the more discreet the dialogue, the more sympathetic Mr. Aynesworth's admirable acting, the more serious and charming Miss Neilson-Terry's, the more human, the more Anglicised the atmosphere became, the more disquieting this frisky comedy ought to have seemed to those looking out at it from a moral window. But on the first night there was but the faintest sibilant suspicion of disapproval, which was drowned in delighted clapping. The next day I read the papers to see if any critic would shake his finger or scold: not one! Not even in the Nonconformist Press, which once so often and so pathetically resounded with outraged cries. Times are changing. Puritanism in England is going, going, going—I declare I believe the hammer is rising for the third time! A good thing too; for Puritans have done little but make fools of themselves of late years, not distinguishing their friends from their foes, and pitching invariably on trifles. There are two things to note about the performance—the excellent naturalism of the acting of Mr. Aynesworth and Miss Neilson-Terry, and the contrast of Mr. George Bealby's methods with theirs. Mr. Bealby plays the part of the husband in the extravagant style of the French actor who, I believe, originally played the part. It is a farcical part, but even as such he buffoons it much too much; and as the comedy is now played it is of still greater importance that he should adapt himself. By the bye, the invention of the telephone is proving a substitute for the old banished soliloquy. Does the playwright want a character to tell the audience what he or she is feeling? He or she need only sit down in an empty room, ring up a number, and pour out. It is very convenient.

DESMOND MACCARTHY.

Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

ALL kinds of people have recently been reminded of the existence of the working man, and now has come the turn of publishers, booksellers, and readers of new books. The autumn announcements were as huge as ever; but at present, instead of the usual deluge, only a small dribble of books is coming from the press. Many of the most important books of the year are being held up; some of the biggest publishers are doing very little business, and the cause of it all is the binders' strike.

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The strike is a particularly interesting one. One firm of master binders (Messrs. Burn) is fighting its men. Unionists throughout the trade are on good terms with the rest of the employers; so instead of having a general strike, they have resorted to a most effective attack against the one position they desire to damage. They are hitting at the firm they object to through the medium of the publishers. The firm in question does business with most publishers, especially with the older and larger ones; at the same time publishers, as a rule, do not place all their binding orders with one house. The men have therefore announced that in no place will they work on any books issued by publishers who give jobs to Messrs. Burn. The only condition on which these publishers can get their books pushed on is a promise that they will give no work to Messrs. Burn until the dispute is settled. Several publishers have given way rather than risk the ruin of their autumn season. But as I write there are still very many whose operations are completely suspended. And the deadlock is likely to last if their general attitude is illustrated by the action of one big publishing concern which endeavoured to persuade the master binders to retaliate by locking out the men throughout the trade. This suggestion was laughed at; as the master binders have no desire, merely in order to fight the publishers' battle, to attempt to smash a union with which they are on excellent terms. Masters and men have worked amicably together since an arbitration arrangement arrived at ten years ago.

* * *

The dispute does not hurt the binding firms as much as might be supposed. Of course, the amount of work they do for publishers at this time of year is enormous, so enormous that they have to work at heavy pressure throughout the autumn. But the publishers' work is only a rather considerable fraction of the whole, and there is still plenty to do. Such an enormous thing, for example, as the new Telephone Directory will be coming on, and then, besides the great mass of ledgers and so on that have to be bound, there are at this season a huge number of commercial volumes like catalogues and diaries. Those publishers who are not affected by the ban have been asked to expedite the forwarding of their "sheets" to the binders, and most of them have done so. It is in their own interest to do so. Some of them hope to make hay by rushing out books whilst their rivals are standing idle. I have just seen two people closely interested in the strike. One was a publisher not involved in the boycott; he was rubbing his hands at the prospect of additional sales. Another was a novelist whose new book is "held up"; he was looking like a rain-soaked cat. Neither of these parties had any responsibility whatever for what has happened. Such is life.

* * *

The letter from "A Publisher," which appeared in last week's number of THE NEW STATESMAN, confirms, in many espects, what I said here some time ago. I confess to no very great concern over the suppression of novels by Messrs. W. B. Maxwell, Hall Caine, and Compton Mackenzie. Whatever may be the merits of these gentlemen's works, there is no doubt that their positions are secure. Each of them commands a large public, and each of them is probably aware that an occasional banning can do his circulation nothing but good. To a well-known man a touch of the censorship is an additional advertisement, and results in an additional sale. The author more than makes up with booksellers what he loses with the libraries. Where the censorship does hit hard is in the case of new or unknown writers, whose works are not quite sufficiently startling to attract the gratuitous assistance of the literary critics, or not quite sufficiently outspoken to be denounced by the clergy. Many such books, in being banned by the libraries, are deprived at a stroke of more than half their potential sales.

* * *

But what is unfair and stupid is the exercise of the censorship. We may grant that there is a point at which we should all draw the line. I don't see how we can honestly ask the libraries completely to divorce morality and commerce; heaven knows this divorce is too widespread in the modern world. We should none of us condemn a publisher who had refused to accept a saleable work because it was filthy; by the same token a library-owner is not to be condemned if he refuses to circulate what is filthy. The libraries apply the semi-ban to works that they themselves consider moral in intention, but that many of their customers would think indecent because of their frankness; and they apply the ban complete (theoretically at least) to books they think ought not be circulated at all. On paper it looks all right.

* * *

But, unhappily, there are other considerations. In the first place, the ban is sometimes applied hastily and foolishly to books that not one Sunday School teacher out of a hundred would consider unfit for circulation. Obsessed by questions of sex-morality, the libraries forget that morals concern themselves with other things besides sex. They forget, for instance, that libraries with almost a monopoly of the market are morally bound not to inflict a blow on a young author's pocket without careful consideration; they forget that it is a man's moral duty to look at things and not at mere words; they forget, again, that, having swept tens of thousands of readers into their net on the understanding that they can give them what they want to read, it is their moral duty to supply as efficient a service as they possibly can. They ought not to reject casually and gratuitously good books that their clients may want.

* * *

At the present time the libraries are undoubtedly buying, all round, as few books as they can, apart altogether from the ban moral. That is what one might expect in a civilisation like ours; you try to get the greatest possible return from the least possible outlay. But it would be interesting to see what a library could do which did not refuse to buy any book which any customer might ask for. That "A Publisher" is right in saying that their subscribers at present suffer from "continual disappointments and delay," we most of us know from bitter experience. It is curious, is it not, that the Daily Press which is so interested in the censorship never betrays the slightest interest in the efficiency of the libraries?

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Last Sunday, at a Palladium performance, Mme. Lydia Yavorska gave an excerpt from *The Doll's House*. On the programme it was described as being by Henry Gibson. A brother of the well-known girls, I presume.

SOLOMON EAGLE.

NEW NOVELS

The Regent. By ARNOLD BENNETT. Methuen. 6s.

The Devil's Garden. By W. B. MAXWELL. Hutchinson & Co. 6s.

The Poison Belt. By SIR A. CONAN DOYLE. Hodder & Stoughton. 3s. 6d.

The Regent is a sort of sequel to *The Card*, but it is less interesting and less amusing than *The Card*. That that should be so is not Mr. Arnold Bennett's fault. It is due to a defect in his subject. In reading *The Card* we were watching the efforts of a very young man, of very humble birth and circumstances, to make money, to make it by the exercise of qualities which we all of us, at the bottom of our hearts or in some other recess of our being, rather wish that we ourselves possessed. Such a spectacle—youth contending with pluck, ingenuity and some unscrupulousness against all kinds of difficulties—is of itself intriguing and diverting, and when the details of it are arranged for us by Mr. Arnold Bennett, it is pre-eminently good fun. Here, in *The Regent*, we are looking on at the attempts of a man of forty with five thousand a year to spend it, and that is not nearly such an entertaining sight. Still, though not pre-eminently good fun, it is good fun enough. Edward Henry is not so surprising a person as Denry was, but he has some surprises. He himself knew the value of surprises. It was to have one ready on occasion that he carried a hundred-pound note crumpled up in his pocket. For it was characteristic of him to realise that occasions are always liable to arise when the immediate production of a hundred-pound note will enable a man to cut a dash. Such an occasion arose when Mr. Bryany, a man with whom he was bargaining for an option, demanded a sum down on the nail:

"Here!" Mr. Bryany almost shouted. "Don't light your cigarette with my option."

"I beg pardon!" Edward Henry apologised, dropping the document which he had creased into a spill. There were no matches left on the table.

"I'll find you a match."

"It's of no consequence," said Edward Henry, feeling in his pockets. Having discovered therein a piece of paper, he twisted it and rose to put it to the gas.

"Could you slip round to your bank and meet me at the station in the morning with the cash?" suggested Mr. Bryany.

"No, I couldn't," said Edward Henry.

"Well, then, what——?"

"Here, you'd better take this," the "Card," re-born, soothed his host, and, blowing out the spill which he had just ignited at the gas, he offered it to Mr. Bryany.

"What?"

"This, man!"

Mr. Bryany, observing the peculiarity of the spill, seized it and unrolled it—not without a certain agitation. He stammered: "Do you mean to say it's genuine?"

"You'd almost think so, wouldn't you?" said Edward Henry. He was growing fond of this reply, and of the enigmatic, playful tone that he had invented for it.

"But——"

"We may, as you say, look twice at a fiver," continued Edward Henry; "but we're apt to be careless about hundred pound notes in this district. I daresay that's why I always carry one. . . ."

"Well, I'm dashed!" Mr. Bryany attempted to rise, and then subsided back into his chair. "I am simply and totally dashed!"

Such was his method, and it was almost as successful in London as it had been in the Five Towns. Only once was he not quite equal to the emergency, and that was when the alluring Miss Elsie April forced him to accept for his new theatre an extraordinarily bad play—a play, moreover, which he had the acumen to know was extraordinarily bad. I noticed in some paper I was reading the other day that a reviewer, commenting on this incident, spoke of it as unconvincing. In his opinion, shrewd, middle-aged business men were not so easily humbugged. But Mr. Arnold Bennett knows better. He knows that almost any pretty woman can beguile almost any clever man into accepting almost anything. Where he does strain our credulity, I think, is in asking us to believe that the appearance of Isabel Joy, the sensational Suffragette, upon the boards of the Regent Theatre transformed a lamentable failure into a gorgeous success. But by that time, I rather fancy, Mr. Bennett had become a little tired of his undertaking.

On the whole I think that Mr. Maxwell has done well with the characterisation of William Dale, the chief figure in *The Devil's Garden*. I am obliged to put in that qualification, on the whole, because I can't help feeling that throughout a long portion of the story he might have done much better. No doubt in keeping us ignorant for so long of the most important deed in Dale's career—the deed which most affected his soul, though not for many years his external life—Mr. Maxwell acted deliberately. He desired to give us a surprise, and he did give us a surprise. But we paid for that surprise with the loss of a great deal of interest for many pages. Dale committed a murder—at the time he more than half believed it to be justifiable homicide—in a peculiarly brutal way. We are asked to believe that for some months thereafter he suffered from incessant fear of discovery and for long years from something like remorse; and yet, in his conduct, we never get the faintest hint of anything like fear or like remorse. He is represented as for weeks coming down to his breakfast every morning dithering with terror lest the police should be waiting to apprehend him; but not a dither in voice or gesture or aspect is discernible. We are just told by Mr. Maxwell himself of these tremors and trepidations of Dale's, after the dreadful secret of the man's life has been revealed. This reticence of the author's has made the middle portion of his book extremely dull and thrown it into sharp contrast with the first and third portions, which are extremely interesting. Then, again, we hear a good deal from time to time of the havoc wrought in the souls of the young women who were the victims of an elderly profligate's lust. But in the soul of the only victim of whom we are told anything that amounts to anything there is no havoc perceptible. Mavis Dale's body had fallen into the profligate's clutches, but her soul, so far as we are suffered to see it, appears to have escaped quite unscathed. She had been one of old Mr. Barradine's mistresses in her teens and she renewed her intimacy with him after eleven years of her married life. Yet she was not, nor did she regard herself as being, a fallen or lost or ruined woman; on the contrary, she is presented by Mr. Maxwell as being precisely what she herself believed herself to be—a good wife and an admirable mother. Up to the time of his discovery of her infidelity, Dale himself regarded her as a purifying and elevating influence in his life. And even after that discovery, and right up to the end, Mr. Maxwell makes it quite clear that she was a wholesome and a steadying influence upon the man. Is this the reason, I wonder, why the circulating libraries banned the book? Did they consider the moral derivable from Mavis Dale's life to be a dubious one?

The final situation is tragic in the true sense of the term, because one realises that, given the temperament and character of the man and the circumstances in which he was placed, that which happened to him was inevitable; it was fated. It justifies the motto which Mr. Maxwell puts upon his title-page:

The Devil playeth in a man's mind, like a wanton child in a garden, bringing his filth to choke each open path, uprooting the tender plants and trampling the buds that should have blown for the Master.

Recognising with entire conviction that if he remained above ground he would inevitably commit an offence almost identical with that for the committing of which he had murdered Barradine, what was there for Dale to do except that which he decided to do, but which he was prevented from doing by a rather obvious and mechanical device of Mr. Maxwell's?

The theme of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's story, the end of the world and the emotions and thoughts and actions of a group of persons who know that end to be approaching and can do naught but just wait for it, is not a new theme; it has been handled several times before, sometimes extremely well, sometimes rather clumsily; but, well or badly handled, it has always a certain fascination. Sir Arthur has not handled it badly in this little volume—on the contrary, he has handled it rather well. It is not a subject which lends itself easily to humour, and yet Sir Arthur has touched it with humour and the humour never jars, never seems misplaced, never afflicts one with a sense of incongruity. What happened was that not only the earth but the whole solar system, moving through space, passed through a streak of poisoned ether, even as a derelict ship, swept along by an Atlantic current, might pass through a mass of floating seaweed. The preliminary effect of the poison was merely to make those who breathed it irascible and eccentric. The great scientist, Professor Challenger, for instance, who was the first to guess what was coming and who wrote a letter to the *Times* to say so, began the fatal morning by concealing himself under his table and biting his housekeeper in the leg. She fled howling; but ere nightfall she was lying stark, while the Professor and his wife and two or three of his friends were in an upper room, gaining a brief respite by the inhalation of oxygen, of which he had had the foresight to lay in a small store. The store, though small, was sufficient. It lasted long enough to let the earth get through the toxic streak and into the pure ether once again. But, then, there are these five persons, alone in a dead world which obviously must somehow be brought to life again if imaginative conviction is to be sustained and the story is not to fall all to pieces at the end. Of course, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle is quite equal to his task.

HUBERT BLAND.

MR. WELLS' NEW NOVEL

The Passionate Friends. By H. G. WELLS. Macmillan. 6s.

The title of Mr. Wells' new book might give the impression that it would be more occupied with the destinies of individuals and less with things in general than most of his serious books. In so far as the book is a success—and we confess that we read it through at one long sitting—it is a success because that impression is a false one. The "story," as a story, is the worst that Mr. Wells has written; but, happily, the story is not everything.

The book is told in the first person, in the form of an MS., to be read, after the writer's death, by his son. Stephen Stratton is the only son of a country rector of good family. He is brought up in close intimacy with the children of Lady Ladislaw, of Burnmore Park, and on returning from his last term at "Harbury" falls in love with the daughter, his feeling being returned. While he is at Oxford the pair correspond, but Lady Mary, although she meets Stephen at dawn and addresses him as "My Knight, my beautiful young Knight," decides that she cannot contemplate a marriage of horrible poverty with him. She is supposed to be astonishingly clever (she certainly talks like a book) and a walking prediction of the Woman of the Future: she therefore has a novel proposal to make. She is to marry Justin, the multimillionaire (on terms precluding physical relationship), for she cannot forego the influence and dignity wealth can give her. As for Stephen, he is to be content with a lifelong platonic love; he will make her house the centre of his political operations, and she will be guardian angel to his career. Stephen, failing to argue her out of this—we are not convinced that marriage with him, considering the circumstances of the families, would have meant her becoming a household drudge, but he did not mention that—goes to South Africa, where he fights in the war and helps in the subsequent work of resettlement. After five years he returns, his father meanwhile having become rich, and takes up politics. He meets Rachel More, "not eighteen, a soft white slip of being, tall, slender, brown-haired, and silent, with very still, dark eyes," and drifts towards a marriage with her, though his deepest feelings still turn elsewhere.

At this point Lady Mary becomes jealous, and summons him to her side; they become lovers, and, as far as we can deduce, he gets her with child. Justin discovers them. "We two," says Stephen, "must go out into the world, go out now together." No earthly reason is discoverable, save that she is determined that the tragedy must proceed in the framework Mr. Wells has previously constructed; but Lady Mary refuses to fly with her lover and tells him to go. Her relations and her husband, frantic at the thought of the disgrace of a divorce, then abduct her to a remote castle on the west coast of Ireland, where she is immured and deprived of her purse. Mr. Wells' realistic conscience seems to twinge him a little here, for he attempts to red-herring us by saying that if the story was a romantic one by Mr. Marriott-Watson all kinds of desperate stratagems would ensue. At any rate, Stephen hunts for the lady, ultimately discovers that she has returned to London, finds the scandal is all over the place, fights Lady Mary's brother on the doorstep of a club, and has a final interview with Lady Mary in the presence of her friends, and agrees to leave England for three years.

He travels over Europe, Asia, and America, and comes back to marry Rachel More. Lady Mary, unable to keep her word, reopens communications with him, and they have a long correspondence, mainly on the future of the sex problem. They meet by accident in an Alpine inn and spend a day together. Justin gets wind of this; nobody will believe that the meeting was innocent; and, after the last of the long series of tragic partings, Lady Mary poisons herself to save the situation.

We may grant Mr. Wells, as an artist, the right to use what incidents he likes as long as he convinces us; for the credibility of art need not be the credibility of life. But we have a right to expect that he should convince us, and that he fails to do. Not only do the characters in this book scarcely ever "live" at individual moments, but they are not psychologically true to themselves throughout the narrative. Mr. Wells would apparently have us conceive Lady Mary as an ideal woman, almost a super-woman. But saying so does not make her so; her actions belie her and each other. The romantic, passionate woman of some of the love scenes is not the cold-blooded creature of other episodes; when Lady Mary strikes us as anything definite at all she strikes us as most selfish and unattractive; but yet she is so extraordinarily obtuse that she never sees in what direction her selfish interests lie. We may conceivably accept the situation when she marries the rich Justin, although she has a wildly romantic way of breaking with romantic convention. We cannot credit her behaviour when Justin detects her post-marital relations with Stratton. Neither that kidnapping—had she no chance of protesting all the way to Ireland?—nor her previous refusal to run away with Stratton is satisfactorily explained. Lady Mary behaved as no human being could behave, unless it were a weak,

yielding creature: and that, *ex hypothesi*, she is not. Justin's behaviour is equally incredible; he, who behaves like a Surrey-side villain, concludes by remarking to Stratton, "We killed her. We tore her to pieces between us." The remark is out of character, and it is quite untrue. Except for the kidnapping, Justin's part had been quite passive, and Stephen was always the woman's puppet, to be pulled here and there as she pleased. They had not torn her to pieces; it would be nearer to the truth to say that she had performed the operation upon them.

The "plot" and the characters are terribly bad. Even the mere writing is not up to Mr. Wells' best standard. The scene on the lake has glamour, but good pieces of descriptive writing are (with the exceptions later to be noticed) very few. The people do not talk the language of civilised English persons. Lady Mary has a habit of addressing Stephen as "old friend" and "dear brother," and language proper only to descriptive writing (this fault Mr. Wells shares with the author of *Nan*) is often put into the characters' mouths. Stephen asks his father: "Who's got all that land stretching away there; that little blunted sierra of pines and escarpments, I mean?" To his cousin he speaks of Ruth: "She's clean and sweet—it is marvellous how the God of the rest of the world can have made a thing so brave and honest and wonderful. She's better than flowers." Almost every page bristles with irritating mannerisms, especially that of continually using the plural of abstract words—"freedoms," "strangenesses," and so on. Yet for one thing, and it is a great thing, the book is worth reading, and worth reading many times. What this is, anyone familiar with Mr. Wells' work will guess. The key to it is found in the first sentence of the book: "I want very much to set down my thoughts and my experiences of life." There is one character Mr. Wells can always draw, and that is his own. It is the one advantage of his habit of writing in the first person that he can spontaneously pour forth, as from his chief character, his own reflections upon, and eager searchings into, all the urgent questions that are haunting the mind of the modern world. In this book the digressions fill an enormous amount of space. He takes Stephen all over the world in a way no other writer could do without giving us the impression that we were reading a novel by Dr. Baedeker. And everywhere, in Asia, in America, in Africa, he unrolls his geographical and historical panorama with stupendous ease and power. The descriptions of the South African war, the strife and the process of healing the wounds of war, is alone more illuminating than a score of "exhaustive" histories. And how moving is that survey of the civilisations of the past, working up to a wonderful passage in which he describes how he felt in Paris:

> The first shadow of that same arrest, that impalpable ebb and cessation at the very crest of things, that voice which opposes to all the hasty ambitions and gathering eagerness of men: "It is not here, it is not yet."

As we read his speculations on politics, on economics, on sex, we feel again that no propagandist alive excels him in determination to free himself from prejudice, in boldness of speculation, in intensity of purpose, in vividness of exposition. As a popular novelist he addresses far wider audiences than he could ever expect to get as a specialised writer on political subjects, or as the spokesman of an organisation. Such books as this must be acting as a mental stimulus to the intellectually most lethargic classes of the population. Whether, therefore, it is as a novel very good or very bad, we cannot but welcome it, and hope that it will be followed by many more as provocative of thought and discussion, and as antagonistic to sheep-like acceptance of things as they are. Stephen Stratton mentions his "sense of the supreme importance of mental classification in human life." It is this sense that is the most predominate element in Mr. Wells' composition, and it is the possession of it that makes him one of the most valuable men alive.

HEADMASTERS AND THE EMPIRE

The Public Schools and the Empire. By HERBERT BRANSTON GRAY, D.D., Chairman of Council, Warden and Headmaster of Bradfield College, Berks, 1880–1910, etc., etc., etc. Williams & Norgate. 6s. net.

One overmastering impression is conveyed by the 374 pages of this substantial volume. Dr. Gray is utterly dissatisfied with the results of his 30 years' labour, and he attributes his failure to the defects of the customary curriculum. It never occurs to him that the cause may be the defects of the teacher. Half a lifetime as headmaster of a big school is enough to devastate the most robust of intellects. The Head walks erect amongst a crowd of boys who tremble at his nod, laugh at his silliest jokes, measure their ignorance by his knowledge, and presently follow the tradition established by Tom Hughes and enforced by Rudyard Kipling, of adoring him as a demigod. Possibly a strong Head can stand ten years' hero-worship, but that is about the limit.

This book purports to advocate the reform of our public schools, but it proves nothing because the author has apparently become incapable of stating any fact directly or giving any information in a definite form. When he has finished the book the reader has learned nothing about these schools; none of them is ever mentioned by name; practically no facts, figures or data of any sort are recorded. At frequent intervals Dr. Gray complains that Englishmen are remarkable for their incapacity for general ideas. His own ideas, so far as we can gather, are nothing but general, without particular application to any thing or person, just vague notions to which "science may possibly point," as he adds in a note to enforce an observation in the text.

To these general ideas we take no particular exception. Dr. Gray favours the abolition of the monopoly held by the rich in the best education; he strenuously objects to examinations and, on the principle of *omne ignotum pro magnifico*, he advocates the teaching of science in place of classics. This last is his constant theme, and on this he lavishes the wealth of a ripe Latinity and of an extensive reservoir of quotations. Every page is sprinkled with tags, English and Latin, varied with occasional French and Greek: German is rare, and apparently Italian is what the author would call a *terra incognita*. Within the space of one page and one line (pp. 135–6) we counted seven Latin tags, besides an apology for omitting 37 lines of the *Iliad* and a reference to the *Æneid*; and all this in a passage denouncing the folly of teaching the dead languages!

The case of the Headmaster is no laughing matter. For ten or twenty years hundreds of promising boys have been educated (for what Dr. Gray calls "useful and reproductive careers"!) by a man who has grown to think it clever to write:

> An English public school is a deposit resulting from the mutual attrition of human ingredients brought together by the fortuitous concourse of atoms which admit certain social affinities and reject others, and which through the action of certain solvents such as time and atmosphere are precipitated in a form of crystallisation known as a "public school." The action of the said solvents gives off a certain "spirit," which finds its analogue in adult English "Society."

Whether examinations should be abolished we cannot say, because Dr. Gray, though he denounces them in page after page of turgid verbiage, nowhere faces the difficulty of

finding any substitute for them. Whether science should replace classics we cannot judge, because Dr. Gray has evidently not the faintest acquaintance with science (he tells us in a chapter headed "*Ædificatio de Novo*" that the "infant man" "reproduces in his progress from birth (*sic*) to maturity in his own person the evolution of the whole creative order"); and he says nothing of what science he would teach or of how it should be taught. Indeed, one is left wondering whether science *is* taught at Bradfield College, and, if so, with what results. The school's reputation has not lain in that direction hitherto, but who knows?

Of education of or by women his only suggestion is that "the male unconsciously radiates certain waves of electricity which if they remain unabsorbed tend to maintain and develop masculine energy, but which if in constant contact with opposing waves of electricity diffused by the other sex become equally and unconsciously absorbed thereby," and therefore boys should not be taught by women.

The lesson of this book is clear enough. There may or may not be a case for the reform of public schools, but the case for the reform of headmasters is overwhelming. Environment, according to Dr. Gray, is all-powerful in the shaping of character, and the environment of the Headmaster is destructive of the man. Headmasters, like publicans, should be given a ten years' time limit, and then they should all automatically become Bishops.

FROM MOHAMMED TO MOHONK

The Modern Social Religion. By HORACE HOLLEY. Sidgwick & Jackson. 5s. net.

Those who are interested in Persia, and those who attempt to follow that complex intellectual and moral process called the Awakening of the East, have long been aware of the rise and progress of Babism and its later phase, the creed of Mirza Ali Nūri, known as Baha Ullah. The story has often been told, by none better than the Count de Gobineau and Professor E. G. Browne. We heard with wonder and delight of the birth of a new religion in the full light of the nineteenth century, a religion that had its prophets, scriptures, miracles and martyrs, and that boldly challenged venerable Islam in one of its fanatical strongholds. The new movement seemed of infinite significance: students of comparative religion looked eagerly for the light which by analogy and contrast it might shed on the early history of the older creeds; reformers hailed it as the Protestantism or Modernism of Islam; the elements of Muslim life which by most European observers were regarded as impassable barriers in the path of Muslim progress: slavery, the subjection of women, political despotism, religious intolerance, were abrogated in the new dispensation; it was felt that the adoption of Bahaism might lead to the moral and political regeneration of Persia and the whole East.

The later history of Baha Ullah's faith has not to our mind fulfilled these anticipations, nor do they appear justified to our view of its early phase. The movement began in 1843, when Mirza Ali Muhammad, a young theologian of Shiraz, came forward as the bearer of a divine message, and adopted the symbolical title of Bab, which signifies Gate. Holy men who see visions and work miracles never lack a following in the East, and there was much in Ali Muhammad's personality and life that was lovable and magnetic. His sincerity, that is the subjective reality of his religious experience, is not to be doubted. But his attitude has not always been correctly interpreted by his European admirers; the atmosphere of his early church was not that of Modernism and reform, for the background of his teaching was esoteric Shi'ism, and the outlook of this prophet and his disciples was that of the Mystics of the Middle Ages. He appeared not as a religious and social reformer come to purge contemporary Islam of its abuses, and guide it in the path of progress, but as the herald of a supernatural millennium. Islam had long been waiting the coming of the Imam Mahdi, "he whom God would manifest," and who (in the words of the tradition) "would fill the earth with justice, even as now it is full of tyranny." Mirza Ali Muhammad preached the coming of this Messiah, and announced himself as his forerunner. He received divine inspirations and new scriptures couched in apocalyptic obscurity and mystical allusiveness. The symbolism of letters and numbers played a great part. In the language of the Sufi mystics, the Bab claimed immediate participation in the Divine nature, and such elements of social ideas as were contained in the new revelation—like communism and the emancipation of women—were treated as millennistic visions rather than as practical problems of immediate urgency. We need not repeat the story of the Bab's tragic death, nor dwell on the martyrdom of many of his early disciples and the rapid spread of his religion in spite of cruel repression and persecution. But we wish to emphasise our view that Babism is not an isolated phenomenon or a startlingly new thing in Eastern religious life, but that it connects by analogy and spiritual descent with the earlier manifestations of Sufism and Mahdism, and that the intellectual pedigree of Mirza Ali Muhammad does not ally him with Luther or Rousseau, but with Mansūr the Woolcarder and Hasan ibn Sabbāh and other heresiarchs of medieval Islam.

The student who takes this view of the Bab's movement—and we believe it to be the right view—cannot but regard its latest phase with amazed misgiving. Babism has travelled far indeed since the time when it was the scandal and the spiritual hope of mosque and madrasa in far Shiraz. The Persian mystic's message is now offered to Europe and America as the new social religion, which is the synthesis of all older creeds, and its votaries congregate in Kensington and erect temples in Chicago. It is no longer a movement to revive and reform Islam, but the universal religion of the future, destined to supersede by absorbing the systems of Moses, Christ, and Muhammad, and incidentally to solve the political and social problems of modern life.

The higher aspirations and wider aims of Babism date from the appearance upon its stage of Mirza Husain Ali Nūri, better known as Baha Allah. Some time after the Bab's death this remarkable man announced to his followers that he was the supreme manifestation of God foretold by the Bab. The claim was enthusiastically received by the majority of the community, and the movement thenceforth came to be known as Bahaism. But the Church had hardly entered on its new phase when it seemed eager to forget its origins. Many of the Bab's ordinances were set aside, his scriptures were superseded by new revelations, the spiritual adherence of the disciples transferred to the new prophet. The general tendency of the changes in doctrine and attitude was to eliminate the specific Islamic and Oriental elements in Babism, and to make the new creed acceptable to converts who did not start from a Muhammadan basis. The Baha's apostles thenceforward were all things to all men: to Muslims they represented Baha Ullah as the Imam Mahdi, to Oriental Christians as the re-incarnation of Christ. Another attitude was adopted when the movement attracted attention in Europe and hoped for conquests there. Western religion, where it has its strongest hold, lays little stress on miracles and supernatural hopes, but many men look to their faith for guidance in the perplexity caused by modern

problems of social and national life. Hence the apostles of Bahaism appeal to their Western audience in the name of the new social religion, which is to usher in the earthly millennium, and the keynote of whose teaching are vague generalities about universal brotherhood and international peace and social progress.

Baha Ullah died in 1892 at Akka in Syria, where he had lived as a Turkish prisoner. The leadership of the community devolved on his son, Abd ul-Baha, who is carrying on the work in the spirit of his father. He has visited Europe and America, has preached at St. John's, Westminster, and conferred with Mr. R. J. Campbell. He spoke on peace to the New York Peace Society, on international arbitration at the Lake Mohonk Conference, on the philosophy of religion to New Thought Clubs. For ourselves, we were much attracted by the picturesque Eastern sect which had a curious history and a definite character of its own, and incidentally produced some fine poetry. But we confess that we have little patience with the new phase in which it takes its place along with Theosophy and Esoteric Buddhism and "The Higher Thought," as an amiable craze of enthusiasts with a taste for the unusual.

We do not wish to do injustice to Mr. Holley's interesting book. It is well written, and the author's analysis of modern social tendencies contains passages that are striking and admirable, but we cannot approach his message with the seriousness which his enthusiasm demands, and if we refrain from examining in detail the logical implications of Bahaism as presented by its latest apostle, we do so not so much from considerations of space as from a sense of proportion and a dislike of the obvious.

ROMAIN ROLLAND

Romain Rolland: L'homme et l'œuvre. Par PAUL SEIPPEL. Librairie Paul Ollendorff. Paris.

M. Seippel addresses his book to the "friends of Jean Christophe"—that is, presumably, to the faithful who have followed the fortunes of that hero from the enchanting record of *L'Aube*, with its wonderful glimpses into the childhood of genius, down to *La Nouvelle Journée*, where the weary giant, after traversing the vast and chequered board of human experience, is reconciled with himself and with life. In this country, as elsewhere, the faithful admirers of *Jean Christophe* are very numerous; for in spite of its *longueurs*, its Teutonic seriousness, and its absence of humour, perhaps even a little because of these things, the epic of a "generation about to disappear" has gripped the imagination of readers in many countries as no other novel of the twentieth century has done. Jean Christophe is cast in the superhuman mould of a Jean Valjean. The narrative of his spiritual adventures, like *Les Misérables*, outrages all the conventional ideas of French fiction, of its precision, its definiteness of contour, its jewel-like perfection. The truth is that in thinking of French fiction we forget that *Les Aventures de Pantagruel* is among its classics.

There is, then, a wide public that is interested to know more about M. Rolland than can be divined from his books, whether any of the episodes of Jean Christophe are autobiographical, and what are the influences that have moulded his mind. The misfortune is that, in seeking to gratify this natural curiosity, M. Seippel, who was one of the first and firmest of M. Rolland's admirers, must needs minister to the very evil against which Jean Christophe and his creator have alike struggled. No one has combated more boldly the literary clique and the practice of self-advertisement than M. Rolland; yet this book with its effusive admiration is a sign, if any were needed, that there is a danger of his becoming the centre of a sect the sanctuary of which is occupied by a graven image of St. Christopher. Otherwise M. Seippel is a discreet friend, and does not really draw aside the veil by which M. Rolland defends from the idle and the curious his hours of work and his hours of leisure.

The few facts he has to tell are soon told. Romain Rolland was born in 1866 at Clamecy in the Morvan, and inherited his passion for music from his mother. As a young student in the Ecole Normale he was already submitting his æsthetic doubts to Tolstoi, who replied in a long letter which was virtually a first sketch of *What is Art?* Following on his college course there was a brief stay in Rome, and a fruitful intimacy with Malwida von Meysenburg, confidante of the heroes of '48, of Kossuth, Mazzini, Louis Blanc and Herzen, then of the great minds of the 'seventies and 'eighties, of Ibsen, Liszt, Wagner, and Nietzsche. Then came Paris with, at first, difficulties of the kind that beset young genius in *La foire sur la Place*, issuing in a professional career and a share in the moral struggle of *l'Affaire Dreyfus*; and gradually, after a vain effort to create a French national theatre, the certainty that he himself was a writer whose voice was eagerly heard by those looking for the truth of a new France.

Those who seek for autobiographical indications in Jean Christophe will derive little satisfaction from M. Seippel's narrative; he warns that even episodes which may seem to have their counterpart in real life are seen through the strong refracting medium of a highly developed artistic temperament. But he throws some light on the origins of *Jean Christophe* when he points out that the three main sections into which the eleven volumes are divided correspond roughly in time to their author's three great biographies of Beethoven, Michael Angelo, and Tolstoi. For the Olympian detachment and calm of *La Nouvelle Journée* the counterpart should be a volume on Goethe, which is still to seek. But there is no doubt that the dominating influence is M. Rolland's passion for Beethoven; his mind is saturated with Beethoven. The special character of his writing is perhaps explained by the fact that he approaches the world of impressions through the channels of audition, not through that of sight. He has the musician's mind, which thinks not in shapes, in words, but in sounds. He says himself that his first conception of the book he proposes to write is the musical impression of its ensemble, the rhythm of its volumes, of the chapters composing the volumes, of the episodes which make up each volume—that is, he conceives a book as a musician conceives a symphony. And in *Jean Christophe* he has turned his great imaginative powers to the colossal theme of the development of a new national life, a new art, and a new social order emerging from the chaotic France of the concluding years of the last century. He dreams of a new Europe, in which the genius of the two great Continental nations of Western Europe, complementary to one another in so many respects, will be used to build up in common a newer and a better social order.

SHORTER NOTICES

The Everyman Encyclopædia. Vols. 1–8. (A—MAC.) Dent. 1s. each net.

The main object of the publishers of this Encyclopædia appears to be to give purchasers a record quantity of words per shilling. Each volume (except the first) ends precisely on page 640, and contains at least half a million words. This means, however, that the use of small type is necessitated, which, in the absence of leads between the lines, makes the reading of the longer articles anything but comfortable to normal eyes. We cannot but express appreciation of the number of subjects treated and the up-to-date character of many of them, but there are several points about the Encyclopædia which strike us as unfortunate. In the first place, the bibliographies appended to most of the important articles are hopelessly inadequate and contain innumer-

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Hansard's Parliamentary Debates, 4th series, 1892-1908, vols. 51 and 53-65 inclusive.

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able misprints and wrong dates. Bibliographies are, of course, an essential part of any book of general reference; they are the steps that lead from the short introduction to a subject, supplied by an article, to thorough acquaintance with it. Accuracy is, therefore, even more necessary than completeness, because a student who starts with a short but correct list can find his way about where he would be entirely confused by references to books he cannot trace because their authors' names are misspelt, or whose importance he may misjudge because their dates are incorrectly given. Let us give an example. *The Origin of Species* is in the list of Huxley's works. It is also in other lists. In the bibliography under "Biology" its date of publication is given as 1902. Under "Darwinism" the date is 1889; under "Evolution" it is correctly given as 1859. In the first two articles the date of the *Descent of Man* is also wrongly stated. Another criticism we would make is that the proofs appear to have been read with extraordinary carelessness and by persons whose strongest point was not their knowledge of foreign languages. However, these criticisms do not alter the fact that in this Encyclopædia we shall have a properly arranged mass of information. We cannot expect infallibility—at any rate, not at two shillings the million words.

Cubism. By ALBERT GLEIZES and JEAN METZINGER. Fisher Unwin. 5s. net.

As the authors assure us that only four or five painters understand the fundamental law of Cubism, we need make no excuses for our being amongst the laity. When we are told that Cézanne suggests Rembrandt and that "an attentive study of Michelangelo authorises us to say that the Cubists have won their patent of nobility," we can but tremble in silence. With the incomprehensible theory of Cubist painting (one canon of which is that position on the canvas does not matter) there is little point in dealing, as we have in the appendix twenty-five specimens of its practice. These vary immensely. There is, for example, nothing obviously wrong with Cézanne's "Woman in Red," except that she is insane. But Picasso's "Guitar Player" is merely a blob. Metzinger, one of the authors, exhibits a "Nude" in which we can faintly distinguish a face amidst an avalanche of collars and cuffs. Compared with these, the Futurists have almost as much to recommend them as they themselves claimed in their "Manifesto."

Experiments in Government and the Essentials of the Constitution. By ELIHU ROOT. Oxford University Press. 4s. 6d. net.

The substance of two lectures delivered at Princeton University. We cannot find any particularly illuminating thoughts in these tributes to the American Constitution. Perhaps the most interesting, and distinctly the least vague, of Senator Root's criticisms is on the Referendum. He fears that State legislatures, with a veto on their performances by means of the Referendum on one side of them, and with a law-making machine in the shape of the Initiative on the other side, may deteriorate in quality, as there is little to induce able men to become members of a body which has little responsibility or confidence. The only remedy for the evils of the American legislative system that Senator Root can support is the Short Ballot—that is, giving the elector only a few things to consider and act upon at the same time, instead of "the great blanket sheets with scores of officers and hundreds of names to be marked" which "are quite beyond the intelligent action in detail of nine men out of ten."

Advance, India! By M. DE P. WEBB. P. S. King. 5s. net.

Is India to have an open, free mint? The Indian Currency Committee of 1899 recommended an affirmative reply, and the preliminary steps were taken to establish a gold mint. Then the India Office stepped in and the plan went to pieces. Now the Royal Commission on Indian Finance and Currency has been appointed, and once again the riddle will have to be solved. Mr. J. M. Keynes, the economist member of the Commission, had completed a book on Indian Currency and Finance just before his appointment to the Commission, and opposed the open, free mint. Last comes Mr. Webb, the industrious Chairman of the Karachi Chamber of Commerce, once again to plead for the adoption of the recommendations of the Indian Currency Committee. There are many people who refuse to admit the necessity of inflicting a gold currency on a silver-using country, but it is better to hold over arguments until after the publication of the Commission's report and the evidence given before it. Mr. Webb's book would have impressed its readers more if the unnecessary references to the Chancellor of the Exchequer had been omitted.

Engineering of Antiquity and Technical Progress in Arts and Crafts. By GEORGE FREDERICK ZIMMER, A.M.Inst.C.E. Probsthain & Co. 5s. net.

This brief introduction to the constructional work of the ancient Egyptians has little to add to existing accounts, and is noteworthy mainly because of its extremely interesting reproductions of Egyptian

and Assyrian frescoes and bas-reliefs. The booklet unexpectedly ends with a lengthy quotation about the engineering accomplishments of Leonardo da Vinci.

The State Provision of Sanatoriums. By S. V. PEARSON. Cambridge University Press.

This little book is intended for the use of County Councillors, doctors, and National Health Insurance Committeemen. It contains a mass of commonsense of the necessary but less obvious variety, such as would enable the uninitiated to criticise the plans of a sanatorium with intelligence and to understand the point of any particular effort made to fight tuberculosis in any of its stages. The generous spirit in which the book is written, no less than the information it contains, should secure it a cordial reception from all those whom the National Insurance Act has brought together with the purpose of putting an end to tuberculosis.

All the World's Aircraft. Edited by FRED. T. JANE. Fifth year of issue. Sampson, Low, Marston & Co. 21s.

The preface to the new edition of this extraordinarily interesting publication points out that already the aeroplane has reached the stage when improvements in detail are sought for rather than complete changes, so that changes during the last two years are of less importance relatively than those which were made between 1909 and 1911. The book gives full particulars of the aeroplanes and dirigibles of the world, about their engines, makers, etc. There is also a "Who's Who" which, so far as we have tested it, is accurate and well informed. Why is there no mention of Lieut. Sippe? Perhaps the most interesting of the illustrations are those of the "Historical Aircraft," because from these we see how far changes have gone. Some of the designs are calculated to amuse rather than to fly, and in fact many of the quaint helicopters and ornithopters exhibited never left the ground.

Recollections and Impressions of the Rev. John Smith, M.A., for Twenty-five Years Assistant Master at Harrow School. By EDWARD D. RENDALL and GERALD H. RENDALL. Smith, Elder. 3s. 6d. net.

These recollections of a saintly schoolmaster will appeal to many who have never heard of John Smith. During the twenty-six years he was at Harrow he both practised and preached Christianity in a manner—exceptional amongst schoolmasters—which did not waste its appeal on the sense of humour of the boys, but awakened in them a feeling of reverence, which, as the end showed, his breakdown could not shake. It was indeed a pious work of the authors to preserve from oblivion this simple and modest man who influenced so many characters for good.

THE CITY

THE report and accounts of the Brazil Railway Company for 1912, issued a few days ago, have aroused a great deal of interest, for during the last two years the securities of this Company have been dealt in enormously throughout Europe, and the last eight or nine months have witnessed a sensational fall in all of them. The fall has been so pronounced that it is evident there must have been something more than the general depression to account for it; and there have been vague rumours of enormous speculation in some of the securities by persons connected with the Company, and it has furthermore been hinted that some of these speculations have occasioned a change of personnel in the higher ranks of one of the big Paris banks. The Company owns, controls, or works, an enormous network of railways in the southern portion of Brazil, covering the States of Minas Geraes, Sao Paulo, Parana, Sta. Catharina, and Rio Grande do Sul. Many of these systems it is linking up and extending, and in the extreme west it controls the Antofagasta and Bolivia Railway running through Chile and Bolivia, whilst in the west of Brazil, in the State of Amazonas, it controls the wonderful Madeira-Mamore Railway; it also has a railway system in Uruguay. In addition to these railway undertakings, the Company, by means of subsidiary companies, has in progress large port works, hotel schemes, it is developing forests, is carrying out colonisation schemes, and is breeding cattle.

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The presiding genius of the Brazil Railway Company is a Mr. Percival Farquhar, an American, who has had the breadth of vision to see South America as a geographical whole instead of a series of units, and has consequently embarked upon some most ambitious schemes. For these he has secured the backing of some of the biggest financial interests in Europe, and there is little doubt in my mind that the Brazil Railway will eventually become one of the great railway systems of the world; but it looks as though Mr. Farquhar and his associates have been going ahead a bit too fast, and a series of traffic decreases during the last seven months, together with the vague rumours already referred to, give one the impression that the next year or so may be a difficult period for the Company, although of its ultimate brilliant success there can be little doubt. If any ordinary holder of this Company's securities has been able to get a clear idea of the Company's position from the report and accounts, he is clearly destined to succeed in high finance, and need no longer earn an honest living. To start with, the figures given throughout the report and accounts are sometimes in Brazilian milreis, sometimes in American dollars, and sometimes in pounds sterling. After reducing all these figures to dollars (the Company is an American one) it looks as though the Company had earned its debenture and preference share interest with a margin of about $800,000; but as it has largely increased its indebtedness and capitalisation, it will, during the present year, have to find a much larger sum than was necessary in 1912, and the margin behind the preference share interest may be very slender indeed until such time as the various undertakings into which the new capital has gone become productive. It is stated that the Company is gradually going to issue, on the Continent, another £6,000,000 of debentures. If this goes into undertakings producing an immediate revenue—all right! If not it is difficult to see where the interest is coming from. Taking everything into account, however, I consider the 5 per cent. debentures of the Company, at their present price of 81, yielding £6 3s. 6d. per cent., are a good purchase; and that its 6 per cent. Cumulative Preference shares, which at the present price of £77 10s. per $500 give the high yield of £7 13s. 6d. per cent., are a good semi-speculative investment for those who realise that for the next few years the Company will probably have as much as it can do to earn the full interest thereon. In course of time, however, as the financial position of this vast undertaking becomes more consolidated, these shares should rise to par. The Ordinary shares should be a good speculative lock-up for millionaires and successful playwrights.

* * *

It is by no means a strange coincidence that both in the United States and Great Britain the railway companies should find themselves confronted by a hostile public, for, as was shown recently by the Board of Trade return, prepared on the motion of Mr. Chiozza Money, these are the only two countries in the world which have not in some shape or form adapted the principle of State ownership to railways. There is, however, one important difference between the American and the British railways, in that the United States Government does not carry out all the instructions it receives from the Railway Directors. From a friendly firm of stockbrokers, in Philadelphia, I have received a beautifully illustrated pamphlet entitled "The 1913 Flood and how it was Met by a Railroad," and in sending this, my friends write:

For some time past the Pennsylvania Railroad (through its publicity department) has been issuing printed matter with the very commendable object of enlightening the general public with regard to the railroad and what it is trying to do, and some of the difficulties it encounters. It is an endeavour to take the public more fully into the confidence of the railroads with the idea that fair treatment may be

accorded them in place of a great deal of adverse legislation which they have been hitherto subjected to.

The brochure is really excellently got up, and conveys the impression that the Company displayed the utmost solicitude for all of its passengers who were held up. For example, it states that passengers who were held up by the floods were fed and housed, either on the trains or, wherever possible, in hotels or private houses, and there follows the laconic sentence: "the Company paid all the bills." Passengers were told they could return to their starting points free of charge, and altogether their treatment seems to have been somewhat different from that which the Great Eastern administered to its unfortunate clients who were held up by the recent accident to the Cromer express.

* * *

The idea of reducing public hostility by means of pamphlets like this is clever, and I commend it to our own railway companies, whose brilliant efforts in this direction thus far appear to be limited to an article in the *Daily Mail*, on Tuesday last, eulogising Mr. Cecil Paget, General Superintendent, and only son of the late Chairman, of the Midland Railway, as one of the greatest railwaymen England has ever had—in fact "a sort of Kitchener in the railway world." An article of this description, on the heels of the Aisgill disaster, reveals a degree of tact which extorts admiration, and we must charitably hope that the article is due to "private enterprise" and was not inspired by the railway company itself. The system of "train control" (immortalised in this country by the Richardson case), the invention of which the aforesaid article attributes to Mr. Paget (although the Great Western Railway has since pointed out that it introduced it before the Midland!), comes from America; perhaps Mr. Paget, or some other railway genius in this country, will "invent" illustrated brochures like that referred to above. There is need of them.

EMIL DAVIES.

FINANCIAL ITEMS

The Star Assurance Society.—Following the retirement of Mr. Elderton from the Actuaryship of this Society, that position has been re-assumed by the General Manager (Mr. J. Douglas Watson), who relinquished it in Mr. Elderton's favour in 1911, and the Directors of the Star have appointed Mr. Henry Edward Melville Assistant Actuary. Mr. Melville has received his assurance training at the Alliance, and is known as one of the most promising of the younger men in the Actuarial profession. He obtained his Fellowship of the Institute of Actuaries in 1908.

Buffalo and Lake Huron Railway Co.—On and after October 1st next, the English Association of American Bond and Shareholders, Ltd., 5 Great Winchester Street, London, E.C., as the London Agent of the Company, will be prepared to receive Second Mortgage 5½ per cent. Perpetual Bonds and to issue new sheets of coupons therefor.

Swiss Bankverein.—The Accounts for the first half of the current year were submitted to the Board of Directors at their meeting at Basle on the 17th inst. After deduction of Frs. 2,805,495·88 for expenses, taxes, and provision for bad and doubtful debts, the net profits for the half-year amount to Frs. 4,719,738·78 without taking into consideration balance brought forward from last year.

Anglo-South American Bank, Ltd.—At a meeting of the shareholders, to be held on the 1st prox., the Directors will submit accounts for the year ended June 30th, 1913, showing a profit (including £40,797 4s. 2d. brought forward) of £361,161 11s. 4d. They will recommend a final dividend of 6s. per share on Old Shares, and 3s. 7d. per share on New Shares, less Income Tax, making a total distribution for the year of 12 per cent.; that £60,000 be added to the Reserve Fund, making the total thereof £1,560,000; £8,000 be added to the Staff Pension and Guarantee Fund, that £13,000 be distributed as a Bonus to the Staff, that £20,000 be applied in reduction of Bank Premises Account, and that the balance of £49,000 12s. 9d. be carried forward.

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